

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

N^o. 77.]

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1860.

A DAY'S RIDE: A LIFE'S ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XI.

I TAKE it for granted that all special "charities" have had their origin in some specific suffering. At least I can aver that my first thought on landing at Ostend was, Why has no great philanthropist thought of establishing such an institution as a Refuge for the Sea-sick? I declare this publicly, that if I ever become rich—a consummation which, looking to the general gentleness of my instincts, the wide benevolence of my nature, and the kindness of my temperament, mankind might well rejoice at—if, I repeat, I ever become rich, one of the first uses of my affluence will be to endow such an establishment. I will place it in some one of our popular ports, say Southampton. Surrounded with all the charms of inland scenery, rich in every rustic association, the patient shall never be reminded of the scene of his late sufferings. A velvety turf to stroll on, with a leafy shade above his head, the mellow lowing of cattle in his ears, and the fragrant odours of meadow-sweet and hawthorn around, I would recal the sufferer from the dread memories of the slippery deck, the sea-washed stairs, or the sleepy state-room. For the rattle of cordage and the hoarse trumpet of the skipper, I would substitute the song of the thrush or the blackbird; and, instead of the thrice odious steward and his basin, I would have trim maidens of pleasing aspect to serve him with syllabubs. I will not go on to say the hundred devices I would employ to cheat memory out of a gloomy record, for I treasure the hope that I may yet live to carry out my theory and have a copyright in my invention.

It was with sentiments deeply tintured by the above that I tottered, rather than walked, towards the Hôtel Royal. It was a bright moonlight night, and, as if in mockery of the weather outside, as still and calm as might be. Many a picturesque effect of light and shade met me as I went: quaint old gables flaring in a strong flood of moonlight showed outlines the strangest and oddest; twinkling lamps shone out of tall, dark-sided old houses, from which strains of music came plaintively enough in the night air; the sounds of a prolonged revel rose loudly out of that deep-pillared chateau-like building in the Place, and in the quiet alley adjoining I could

catch the low song of a mother as she tried to sing her baby to sleep. It was all human in every touch and strain of it. And did I not drink it in with rapture? Was it not in a transport of gratitude that I thanked Fortune for once again restoring me to land? "O Earth, Earth!" says the Greek poet, "how art thou interwoven with that nature that first came from thee?" Thus musing, I reached the inn, where, although the hour was a late one, the household was all active and astir.

"Many passengers arrived, waiter?" said I, in the easy, careless voice of one who would not own to sea-sickness.

"Very few, sir; the severe weather has deterred several from venturing across."

"Any ladies?"

"Only one, sir; and, poor thing, she seems to have suffered fearfully. She had to be carried from the boat, and when she tried to walk upstairs, she almost fainted. There might have been some agitation, however, in that, for she expected some one to have met her here; and when she heard that he had not arrived, she was completely overcome."

"Very sad, indeed," said I, examining the carte for supper.

"Oh yes, sir; and being in deep mourning, too, and a stranger away for the first time from her country."

I started, and felt my heart bounding against my side.

"What was it you said about deep mourning, and being young and beautiful?" asked I, eagerly.

"Only the mourning, sir—it was only the mourning I mentioned; for she kept her veil close down, and would not suffer her face to be seen."

"Bashful as beautiful! modest as she is fair!" muttered I. "Do you happen to know whither she is going?"

"Yes, sir; her luggage is marked 'Brussels.'"

"It is she! It is herself!" cried I, in rapture, as I turned away, lest the fellow should notice my emotion. "When does she leave this?"

"She seems doubtful, sir; she told the landlady that she is going to reside at Brussels; but never having been abroad before, she is naturally timid about travelling even so far alone."

"Gentle creature, why should she be exposed

to such hazards? Bring me some of this fricandeau with chicory, waiter, and a pint of Beaune; fried potatoes, too.—Would that I could tell her to fear nothing," thought I. "Would that I could just whisper, 'Potts is here; Potts watches over you; Potts will be that friend, that brother, that should have come to meet you! Sleep soundly, and with a head at ease. You are neither friendless nor forsaken!'" I feel I must be naturally a creature of benevolent instincts; for I am never so truly happy as when engaged in a work of kindness. Let me but suggest to myself a labour of charity, some occasion to sorrow with the afflicted, to rally the weak-hearted, and to succour the wretched, and I am infinitely more delighted than by all the blandishments of what is called "society." Men have their allotted parts in life, just as certain fruits are meet for certain climates. Mine was the grand comforting line. Nature meant me for a consoler. I have none of those impulsive temperaments which make what are called jolly fellows. I have no taste for those excesses which go by the name of conviviality. I can, it is true, be witty, anecdotic, and agreeable; I can spicè conversation with epigram, and illustrate argument by apt example; but my forte is tenderness.

"Is not this veal a little tough, waiter?" said I, in gentle remonstrance.

"Monsieur is right," said he, bowing; "but if a morsel of cold pheasant would be acceptable—mademoiselle, the lady in mourning, has just taken a wing of it—"

"Bring it directly.—Oh, ecstasy of ecstasies! We are then, as it were, supping together—served from the same dish!—May I have the honour?" said I, filling out a glass of wine and bowing respectfully and with an air of deep devotion across the table. The pheasant was exquisite, and I ate with an epicurean enjoyment. I called for another pint of Beaune, too. It was an occasion for some indulgence, and I could not deny myself. No sooner had the waiter left me alone, than I burst into an expansive acknowledgment of my happiness. "Yes, Potts," said I, "you are richer in that temperament of yours than if you owned half California. That boundless wealth of good intentions is a well no pumping can exhaust. Go on doing imaginary good for ever. You are never the poorer for all the orphans you support, all the distresses you relieve. You rescue the mariner from shipwreck without wetting your feet. You charge at the head of a squadron without the peril of a scratch. All blessed be the gift which can do these things!"

You call these delusions; but is it delusion to be a king, to deliver a people from slavery, to carry succour to a drowning crew? I have done all of these; that is, I have gone through every changeful mood of hope and fear that accompanies these actions, sipping my glass of Beaune between whiles.

When I found myself in my bedroom I had no inclination for sleep; I was in a mood of enjoyment too elevated for mere repose. It was so

delightful to be no longer at sea, to feel rescued from the miseries of the rocking ship and the reeking cabin, that I would not lose the rapture by forgetfulness. I was in the mood for great things, too, if I only knew what they were to be. "Ah!" thought I, suddenly, "I will write to her. She shall know that she is not the friendless and forsaken creature that she deems herself; she shall hear that, though separated from home, friends, and country, there is one near to watch over and protect her, and that Potts devotes himself to her service." I opened my desk, and in all the impatience of my ardour began:

"DEAR MADAM"—Quare: Ought I to say 'dear'? We are not acquainted, and can I presume upon the formula that implies acquaintanceship? No. I must omit 'dear'; and then 'Madam' looks fearfully stern and rigid, particularly when addressed to a young unmarried lady; she is certainly not 'Madam' yet, surely. I can't begin 'Miss.' What a language is ours! How cruelly fatal to all the tenderer emotions is a dialect so matter-of-fact and formal. If I could only start with 'Gentilissima Signora,' how I could get on! What an impulse would the words lend me! What 'way on me' would they impart for what was to follow! In our cast-metal tongue there is nothing for it but the third person: 'The undersigned has the honour,' &c. &c. This is chilling—it is positively repulsive. Let me see, will this do?—

"The gentleman who was fortunate enough to render you some trivial service at the Milford station two days ago, having accidentally learned that you are here and unprovided with a protector, in all humility offers himself to afford you every aid and counsel in his power. No stranger to the touching interests of your life, deeply sensible of the delicacy that should surround your steps, if you deign to accept his devoted services, he will endeavour to prove himself, by every sentiment of respect, your most faithful, most humble, and most grateful servant.

"P.S.—His name is Potts."

"Yes, all will do but the confounded postscript. What a terrible bathos—'His name is Potts!' What if I say: 'One line of reply is requested, addressed to Algernon Sydney Pottinger, at this hotel'?"

I made a great many copies of this document, always changing something as I went. I felt the importance of every word, and fastidiously pondered over each expression I employed. The bright sun of morning broke in at last upon my labours and found me still at my desk, still composing. All done, I lay down and slept soundly.

"Is she gone, waiter?" said I, as he entered my room with hot water. "Is she gone?"

"Who, sir?" asked he, in some astonishment.

"The lady in black, who came over in the last mail packet from Dover; the young lady in deep mourning, who arrived all alone."

"No, sir. She has sent all round the hotels this morning to inquire after some one who was

to have met her here, but apparently without success."

"Give her this; place it in her own hand, and, as you are leaving the room, say, in a gentle voice: 'Is there an answer, mademoiselle?' You understand?"

"Well, I believe I do," said he, significantly, as he slyly pocketed the half-Napoleon fee I had tendered for his acceptance.

Now the fellow had thrown into his countenance—a painfully astute and cunning face it was—one of those expressive looks which actually made me shudder. It seemed to say, "This is a conspiracy, and we are both in it."

"You are not for a moment to suppose," said I, hurriedly, "that there is one syllable in that letter which could compromise me, or wound the delicacy of the most susceptible."

"I am convinced that monsieur has written it with most consummate skill," said he, with a supercilious grin, and left the room.

How I detest the familiarity of a foreign waiter! The fellows cannot respond to the most ordinary question without an affectation of showing off their immense acuteness and knowledge of life. It is their eternal boast how they read people, and with what an instinctive subtlety they can decipher all the various characters and temperaments that pass before them. Now this impudent lacquey, who is to say what has he not imputed to me? Utterly incapable as such a creature must necessarily be of the higher and nobler motives that sway men of my order, he will doubtless have ascribed to me the most base and degenerate motives.

I was wrong in speaking one word to the fellow. I might have said, "Take that note to Number Fourteen, and ask if there be an answer;" or better still if I had never written at all, but merely sent in my card to ask if the lady would vouchsafe to accord me an audience of a few minutes. Yes, such would have been the discreet course; and then I might have trusted to my manner, my tact, and a certain something in my general bearing, to have brought the matter to a successful issue. While I thus meditated, the waiter re-entered the room, and, cautiously closing the door, approached me with an ostentatious pretence of secrecy and mystery.

"I have given her the letter," said he, in a whisper.

"Speak up!" said I, severely; "what answer has the lady given?"

"I think you'll get the answer presently," said he, with a sort of grin that actually thrilled through me.

"You may leave the room," said I, with dignity, for I saw how the fellow was actually revelling in the enjoyment of my confusion.

"They were reading it over together for the third time when I came away," said he, with a most peculiar look.

"Whom do you mean? who are they that you speak of?"

"The gentleman that she was expecting. He came by the 9.40 train from Brussels. Just in

time for your note." As the wretch uttered these words, a violent ringing of bells resounded along the corridor, and he rushed out without waiting for more.

I turned in haste to my note-book; various copies of my letter were there, and I was eager to recall the expressions I had employed in addressing her. Good Heavens! what had I really written? Here were scraps of all sorts of absurdity; poetry too! verses to the "Fair Victim of a recent War," with a number of rhymes for the last word, such as "low," "snow," "mow," &c.—all evidences of composition under difficulty.

While I turned over these rough copies the door opened, and a large, red-faced, stern-looking man, in a suit of red-brown tweed and with a heavy stick in his hand, entered; he closed the door leisurely after him, and I half thought that I saw him also turn the key in the lock. He advanced towards me with a deliberate step, and, in a voice measured as his gait, said,

"I am Mr. Jopplyn, sir—I am Mr. Christopher Jopplyn."

"I am charmed to hear it, sir," said I, in some confusion, for, without the vaguest conception of wherefore, I suspected lowering weather ahead.

"May I offer you a chair, Mr. Jopplyn? Won't you be seated? We are going to have a lovely day, I fancy—a great change after yesterday."

"Your name, sir," said he, in the same solemnity as before—"your name I apprehend to be Porringer?"

"Pottinger, if you permit me; Pottinger, not Porringer."

"It shall be as you say, sir: I am indifferent what you call yourself." He heaved something that sounded like a hoarse sigh, and proceeded: "I have come to settle a small account that stands between us. Is that document your writing?" As he said this, he drew, rather theatrically, from his breast-pocket the letter I had just written, and extended it towards me. "I ask, sir—and I mean you to understand that I will suffer no prevarication—is that document in your writing?"

I trembled all over as I took it, and for an instant I determined to disavow it; but in the same brief space I bethought me that my denial would be in vain. I then tried to look boldly, and brazen it out; I fancied to laugh it off as a mere pleasantry, and, failing in courage for each of these, I essayed, as a last resource, the argumentative and discusional line, and said,

"If you will favour me with an indulgent hearing for a few minutes, Mr. Jopplyn, I trust to explain, to your complete satisfaction, the circumstances of that epistle."

"Take five, sir—five," said he, laying a ponderous silver watch on the table as he spoke, and pointing to the minute hand.

"Really, sir," said I, stung by the peremptory and dictatorial tone he assumed, "I have yet to learn that intercourse between gentlemen is to be regulated by clockwork, not to say that I have to inquire by what right you ask me for this explanation."

"One minute gone," said he, solemnly.

"I don't care if there were fifty," said I, passionately. "I disclaim all pretension of a perfect stranger to obtrude himself upon me, and by the mere assumption of a pompous manner and an imposing air, to inquire into my private affairs."

"There are two!" said he, with the same solemnity.

"Who is Mr. Jopplyn—what is he to me?" cried I, in increased excitement, "that he presents himself in my apartment like a commissary of police? Do you imagine, sir, because I am a young man, that this—this—impertinence" —Lord what a gulp it cost me—"is to pass unpunished? Do you fancy that a red beard and a heavy walking-cane are to strike terror into me? You may think, perhaps, that I am unarmed—"

"Three!" said he, with a bang of his stick on the floor, that made me actually jump with the stick.

"Leave the room, sir," said I. "It is my pleasure to be alone—the apartment is mine—I am the proprietor here. A very little sense of delicacy, a very small amount of good breeding, might show you, that when a gentleman declines to receive company, when he shows himself indisposed to the society of strangers—"

"One minute more, now," said he, in a low growl, while he proceeded to button up his coat to the neck, and make preparation for some coming event.

My heart was in my mouth; I gave a glance at the window; it was the third story, and a leap out would have been fatal. What would I not have given for one of those weapons I had so proudly proclaimed myself possessed. There was not even a poker in the room. I made a spring at the bell-rope, and before he could interpose, gave one pull that, though it brought down the cord, resounded through the whole house.

"Time is up, Porringer," said he, slowly, as he replaced the watch in his pocket, and grasped his murderous-looking cane.

There was a large table in the room, and I entrenched myself at once behind this, armed with a light cane chair, while I screamed murder in every language I could command. Failing to reach me across the table, my assailant tried to dodge me by false starts, now at this side, now at that. Though a large fleshy man, he was not inactive, and it required all my quickness to escape him. These manœuvres being unsuccessful, he very quickly placed a chair beside the table and mounted upon it. I now hurled my chair at him; he warded off the blow and rushed on; with one spring I bounded under the table, reappearing at the opposite side just as he had reached mine. This tactic we now pursued for several minutes, when my enemy suddenly changed his attack, and descending from the table he turned it on edge: the effort required strength. I seized the moment and reached the door; I tore it open in some fashion, gained the stairs—the court—the streets—and ran ever

onward with the wildness of one possessed with no time for thought, nor any knowledge to guide; I turned left and right, choosing only the narrowest lanes that presented themselves, and at last came to a dead halt at an open drawbridge, where a crowd stood waiting to pass.

"How is this? What's all the hurry for? Where are you running this fashion?" cried a well-known voice. I turned, and saw the skipper of the packet.

"Are you armed? Can you defend me?" cried I, in terror; "or shall I leap in and swim for it?"

"I'll stand by you. Don't be afraid, man," said he, drawing my arm within his; "no one shall harm you. Were they robbers?"

"No, worse—assassins!" said I, gulping, for I was heartily ashamed of my terror, and determined to show "cause why" in the plural.

"Come in here, and have a glass of something," said he, turning into a little cabaret, with whose penetralia he seemed not unfamiliar. "You're all safe here," said he, as he closed the door of a little room. "Let's hear all about it, though I half guess the story already."

I had no difficulty in perceiving, from my companion's manner, that he believed some sudden shock had shaken my faculties, and that my intellects were for the time deranged; nor was it very easy for me to assume sufficient calm to disabuse him of his error, and assert my own perfect coherency. "You have been out for a lark," said he, laughingly. "I see it all. You have been at one of those tea-gardens and got into a row with some stout Fleming. All the young English go through that sort of thing. Ain't I right?"

"Never more mistaken in your life, captain. My conduct since I landed would not discredit a canon of St. Paul's. In fact, all my habits, my tastes, my instincts, are averse to every sort of juncting. I am essentially retiring, sensitive, and, if you will, over fastidious in my choice of associates. My story is simply this." My reader will readily excuse my repeating what is already known to him. It is enough if I say, that the captain, although anything rather than mirthful, held his hand several times over his face, and once laughed out loudly and boisterously.

"You don't say it was Christy Jopplyn, do you?" said he, at last. "You don't tell me it was Jopplyn?"

"The fellow called himself Jopplyn, but I know nothing of him beyond that."

"Why, he's mad jealous about that wife of his; that little woman with the corkscrew curls and the scrofulous face, that came over with us. Oh! you did not see her aboard, you went below at once, I remember; but there was she in her black ugly, and her old crêpe shawl—"

"In mourning?"

"Yes. Always in mourning. She never wears anything else, though Christy goes about in colours, and not particular as to the tint, either."

There came a cold perspiration over me as I

heard these words, and perceived that my proffer of devotion had been addressed to a married woman, and the wife of the "most jealous man in Europe."

"And who is this Jopplyn?" asked I, haughtily, and in all the proud confidence of my present security.

"He's a railway contractor—a shrewd sort of fellow, with plenty of money, and a good head on his shoulders; sensible on every point except his jealousy."

"The man must be an idiot," said I, indignant, "to rush indiscriminately about the world with accusations of this kind. Who wants to supplant him? Who seeks to rob him of the affections of his wife?"

"That's all very well, and very specious," said he, gravely, "but if men will deliberately set themselves down at a writing-table, hammering their brains for fine sentiments, and toiling to find grand expressions for their passion, it does not require that a husband should be as jealous as Christy Jopplyn to take it badly. I don't think I'm a rash or a hasty man, but I know what I'd do in such a circumstance."

"And, pray, what *would* you do?" said I, half impertinently.

"I'd just say, 'Look here, young gent, is this balderdash here your hand? Well, now, eat your words. Yes, eat them. I mean what I say. Eat up that letter, seal and all, or, by my oath, I'll break every bone in your skin!'

"It is exactly what I intend," cried a voice, hoarse with passion; and Jopplyn himself sprang into the room, and dashed at me.

The skipper was a most powerful man, but it required all his strength, and not very gingersly exercised either, to hold off my enraged adversary. "Will you be quiet, Christy?" cried he, holding him by the throat. "Will you just be quiet for one instant, or must I knock you down?"

"Do! do! by all means," muttered I, for I thought if he were once on the ground, I could finish him off with a large pewter measure that stood on the table.

With a rough shake, the skipper had at last convinced the other that resistance was useless, and induced him to consent to a parley.

"Let him only tell *you*," said he, "what he has told *me*, Christy."

"Don't strike, but hear me," cried I; and safe in my stockade behind the skipper, I recounted my mistake.

"And *you* believe all this?" asked Jopplyn of the skipper, when I had finished.

"Believe it—I should think I do! I have known him since he was a child that high, and I'll answer for his good conduct and behaviour."

Heaven bless you for that bail bond, though endorsed in a lie, honest ship captain! and I only hope I may live to requite you for it.

Jopplyn was appeased; but it was the suppressed wrath of a brown bear rather than the vanquished anger of a man. He had booked him self for something cruel, and he was miserable

to be balked. Nor was I myself—I shame to own it—an emblem of perfect forgiveness. I know nothing harder than for a constitutionally timid man, of weak proportions, to forgive the bullying superiority of brute force. It is about the greatest trial human forgiveness can be submitted to; so that when Jopplyn, in a vulgar spirit of reconciliation, proposed that we should both go and dine with him that day, I declined the invitation with a frigid politeness.

"I wish I could persuade you to change your plans," said he, "and let Mrs. J. and myself see you at six."

"I believe I can answer for him that it is impossible," broke in the skipper; while he added in a whisper, "They never *can* afford any delay—they have to put on the steam at high pressure from one end of Europe to t'other."

What could he possibly mean by imputing such haste to my movements, and who were "they" with whom he thus associated me? I would have given worlds to ask, but the presence of Jopplyn prevented me, and so I could simply assent with a sort of foolish laugh, and a muttered "Very true—quite correct."

"Indeed, how you manage to be here, now, I can scarcely imagine," continued the skipper. "The last of yours that went through this took a roll of bread and a cold chicken with him into the train, rather than halt to eat his supper—but I conclude *you* know best."

What confounded mystification was passing through his marine intellects I could not fathom. To what guild or brotherhood of impetuous travellers had he ascribed me? Why should I not "take mine ease in mine inn?" All this was very tantalising and very irritating, and pleading a pressing engagement, I took leave of them both, and returned to the hotel.

I was in need of rest and a little composure. The incident of the morning had jarred my nerves and disconcerted me much. But a few hours ago, and life had seemed to me like a flowery meadow, through which, without path or track, one might ramble at will; now, it rather presented the aspect of a vulgar kitchen garden, fenced in, and divided, and partitioned off, with only a few very stony alleys to walk in. "This boasted civilisation of ours," exclaimed I, "what is it but snobbery? Our class distinctions—our artificial intercourses—our hypocritical professions—our deference for externals, are they not the flimsiest pretences that ever were fashioned? Why has no man the courage to make short work of these, and see the world as it really is? Why has not some one gone forth, the apostle of frankness and plain speaking, the same to prince as to peasant? What I would like, would be a ramble through the less visited parts of Europe—countries in which civilisation slants in just as the rays of a setting sun steal into a forest at evening. I would buy me a horse. Oh, Blondel," thought I, suddenly, "am I not in search of you? Is it not in the hope to recover you that I am here, and, with you for my companion, am I not content to roam the world, taking each incident of the

way with the calm of one who asks little of his fellow-men save a kind word as he passes, and a God speed as he goes?" I knew perfectly that, with any other beast for my "mount," I could not view the scene of life with the same bland composure. A horse that started, that tripped, that shied, reared, kicked, crooked his neck, or even shook himself, as certain of these beasts do, would have kept me in a paroxysm of anxiety and uneasiness, the least adapted of all moods for thoughtfulness and reflection. Like an ill-assorted union, it would have given no time save for squabble and recrimination. But Blondel almost seemed to understand my mission, and lent himself to its accomplishment. There was none of the obtrusive selfishness of an ordinary horse in his ways. He neither asked you to remark the glossiness of his skin, nor the graceful curve of his neck; he did not passage nor curvet. Superior to the petty arts by which vulgar natures present themselves to notice, he felt that destiny had given him a duty, and he did it.

Thus thinking, I returned once more to the spirit which had first sent me forth to ramble, to wander through the world, spectator, not actor; to be with my fellow-men in sympathy, but not in action; to sorrow and rejoice as they did, but, if possible, to understand life as a drama, in which, so long as I was the mere audience, I could never be painfully afflicted or seriously injured by the catastrophe: a wonderful philosophy, but of which, up to the present, I could not boast any pre-eminent success.

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK.

IT is by no means an uncommon thing, on the contrary it is so common as to approximate to a nuisance, to hear people bitterly complaining of the attention which is paid in this country to the cultivation of Latin and Greek. They say if their sons are to be sent to school and loaded with impositions and prodded with a stick, let it be for something which will profit them, if they survive, in after life. Let them be loaded with impositions for French, and prodded with a stick for German, and murdered for nothing at all. At any rate, don't make their lives a burden for Latin, and their souls weary for Greek. Now with respect to Latin, we have nothing to say, except that we never heard of its doing any great harm; and, being the most difficult language in point of construction, and the most like the German so far of any with which we are acquainted, it might be supposed to be not a bad starting-point for the acquisition of other languages; however, let it go; our business is with Greek; Greek is still a spoken language, Greek is becoming every day more and more like the Greek that boys learn at school; and but lately there was a dinner at the London Tavern at which all the speeches were made in Greek, and such Greek as any scholar with one day's study of a Modern Greek Grammar might read with considerable ease. It must not be imagined that the gentlemen who dined at that well-known

tavern had fallen victims to strong wine and were trying to outvie each other in extravagance by making speeches in the tongues which they had learnt at school. No, they were all as sober as people usually are, after a dinner at the London Tavern. They were an assemblage of gentlemen who have increased and multiplied amongst us, particularly in London, Manchester, and Liverpool, whose names constantly figure in the columns of our newspapers as mingling in our commerce, inhabiting our most fashionable quarters, frequenting our operas, and adding lustre to our Bankruptcy Courts; in fact, they were Greek merchants. They had met together to celebrate an auspicious event in their modern history—the establishment of a newspaper in their own language, which is to be amongst their people (*όμογενεῖς*) what the Times (*ό Χρόνος*) is amongst Englishmen. It is called the British Star (*ό Βρεταννικός Αστήρ*), for what reason we cannot say; whether because it is to enlighten us, or because its rays will diverge from Britain and shed light upon Greeks in all parts of the world, did not transpire.

But, whatever be the origin of its title, its establishment is a proof that the Greeks have not yet relinquished their national language, and that the teaching of the ancient tongue at our schools and universities might, with advantage, be combined with that of the modern. And what would make this easier, is the fact that at the court of Athens, and amongst all educated Greeks—witness Tri-coupi's *Ἐλληνικὴ Επανάστασις*—every effort is made to assimilate the modern to the ancient Greek. We do not mean in those abstruse points which require an acquaintance with Parson's Preface, and Bos on Ellipses, dissertations on *Δι* with the optative mood, essays upon the use of *στῶς* with the indicative mood and all sorts of critical jargon, but in the words themselves that they may be all formed according to the rules of Greek analogy, introducing as little as possible foreign elements. The constructions have been altered for good and simplified amazingly, so that there is no language so easy—if you have had a public school education—of acquisition as the modern Greek. And this is the language which our Greek merchants, as we know personally, make a point of speaking amongst one another; a proficiency in it is therefore, with persons engaged in commercial pursuits, a matter of some moment. It is true that most Greek merchants speak French, but it is always worth while to be able to converse with a man in his mother tongue. In Germany we believe all Greek scholars are acquainted both with the modern constructions and the modern pronunciation, and there is no reason on earth why not only English scholars but English boys at school should not be equally well instructed; nothing would be easier than to combine the modern pronunciation with the ancient mode of construction and inflexion. A boy would then see the use of the accents which now appear to him invented by the enemy simply to try his temper. We ourselves recollect the confusion

which we caused in the mind of a Greek to whom we were pointing out the shape of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. We wished him to understand that it was built in the form of a cross, and we said, 'Η μορφή είναι τοῦ σταύρου. Our Greek friend's mind evidently failed to catch any idea of what we meant; but as soon as we corrected ourselves and said, Συγγράμην, κύριε-σταύρον, a gleam of intelligence flashed across his face, and he crossed his forefingers as he answered, Μάλιστα, μάλιστα, καταλαμβάνω.

But to return to our friends at the London Tavern. A fanciful captain of Engineers (*λοχαγός τοῦ μηχανικοῦ*) says: "I discover Greece in the midst of England, Athens in the centre of London, and I join in your feelings of pride when I see above my head, with joy upon their faces, our ancient gods and heroes listening now for the first time in this famous hall to their own native tongue." There is not a word of Greek in his communication which a very indifferent scholar might not understand; he would translate *φαινόμενον*, "cleaned up for the occasion," perhaps; and he might be right, for the word would bear it, and the circumstance would be probable. At any rate, it is a proof that Hellas is reviving, and that the language of Themistocles and Pericles and the great men of ancient Greece is reviving: and we repeat, why should not our youth have the chance of avail themselves of that fact? Answer may now be made to the querulous inquiry, what is the use of Greek? It may be read and it may be spoken. Why, the very first time we were ever in a Greek's house, we took up a book, and what do you think it was called? Ο περιπλανώμενος Ιούδαιος—the Wandering Jew! We had no idea when we stumbled through *τίντω*, that we should live to read a novel in the Greek character; but greater surprises than that awaited us: we have lived to ask a living creature "if we should ring the bell," "if we should give him some fish," "if we should cut him some bread," "if he would take some meat," &c, all in Greek! But we never thought we should read a police case in Greek; yet we have. The case is headed Μέθη—Drunkenness. A woman of dissipated appearance (*ἀκολάστοντος ὄψεως*) is brought up in the Thames police-court (*ἐν τῷ πταισματοδικείῳ Ταμείῳ*), charged with stealing an overcoat (*ἐπενδύης*), value twelve shillings (*σελίνια*). She pawned (*ἔβαλ* *ἐνίχυρον*) the coat and got drunk with the money (*ἔμεθνοτε μὲ τὰ χρήματα*). The magistrate sentenced the woman to three months' imprisonment and hard labour (*εἰς τριών μηνῶν φυλάκιον καὶ βαρέα ἔργα*). Moreover, the British Star has furnished us with a Life (in Greek) of Sir "Ερρίκος" Αβέλωκ (Sir Henry Havelock), in which we are informed that the hero was born at Βασσογονεαρμάνοβ (Bishop Wearmouth), and in this Life we meet with the names of certain other great men—to wit, Οὐάσιγτων (Washington), Νέλσων (Nelson) and Οὐέλιγτων (Wellington).

The proper names are of course the great difficulty, and the names of places are sometimes almost unintelligible; and the unintelligibility is increased by the uncertainty that appears to exist as yet with respect to the manner of rendering certain combinations of letters: for instance, we find Manchester written in three distinct fashions, Μάνσεστερ, Μαγγεστρία, and Μάντζεστερ—τζ being the orthodox equivalent in modern Greek for *tch* or *ch*. *H* is usually represented by *X*, so that we get the following grotesque-looking words to represent the names of our principal manufacturing towns: ΜΑΝΣΕΣΤΕΡ, ΒΡΑΔΦΟΡΑ, ΑΗΙΔΑΣ, ΧΟΔΕΡΦΙΑΔ, ΧΑΛΙΦΑΞ, ΡΟΣΔΕΗΑ, ΛΕΙΣΤΕΡ, ΝΟΤΙΓΓΑΜΗ, ΒΟΥΛΒΕΡΧΑΜΠΤΩΝ (MANCHESTER, BRADFORD, LEEDS, HUDDERSFIELD, HALIFAX, ROCHDALE, LEICESTER, NOTTINGHAM, WOLVERHAMPTON).

The inhabitants will perhaps think it very hard to be misrepresented to the world in this way; and poor *Beta* is made to do more work than ought to be expected of him. He represents, it will be observed, *B* and *V* and *W*, whereas his only legitimate function is to discharge the simple duties of *V*; *B* we have hitherto been accustomed to see transmogrified into *ΜΠ*; and *W* invariably resolved into *Ου*. It may be that the British Star, as it gains in brilliancy (unless it be a meteor, destined to sudden extinction), will reveal to its writers some plain way of extricating themselves from their embarrassing position, and establishing a method of exchange between the letters which shall relieve not only the hard-worked *Beta*, but his brother in affliction *Delta*. For in modern Greek the proper sound of *δ* is the *th in the*; and the Modern Greeks have no sound *d* except under peculiar circumstances, as when *τ* follows *ν*: thus they pronounce *δύνα*, *οντα*.

It is not our intention to write an Essay upon the modern Greek language, we wish simply to point out to all whom it may concern, that an effort is now being made to reintroduce into Europe, in the purest state compatible with inevitable changes in the world, a language which is not only in general use in the East as the medium of commercial intercourse, but the daily language of society amongst a colony of people established in the heart of our own country; that this language, so far as its general structure and actual words go, is taught in all our public schools and universities, and yet is seldom pursued in after life by any English scholar; and that this language must possess to a great extent the elements of vitality, when it can express in words formed after the analogy of the ancient Greek nearly everything connected with the social life, arts, science, and commerce of the nineteenth century. We cannot quite agree with one of the enthusiastic speakers at the London Tavern, who was of opinion that had the Greeks been represented by their own organ, had the British Star, in fact, existed at the time of those disturbances which

preceded the Crimean war, *οὗτος ὁ Κριμαϊκὸς πόλεμος δὲν ήθελεν ἀκολουθῆσει* (this Crimean war would not have followed). The British Star would have convinced the Greek Christians, both in Greece and in Turkey, that there was no trusting the hollow promises of Russia, and would have convinced the British people, and the world in general, that the best policy of the Greeks as a people was anti-Russian.

However, our view of the British Star is not so much political as educational; it furnishes us with an answer to parents who ask: "But will Greek be any use to my boy *in life?*?" "Yes, sir," or "madam, he may converse in it at the Baltic and elsewhere, if he pleases, and he may read a newspaper printed in that language in the heart of London." But surely, some one will say, you can't talk about "the markets" in Greek! Read this, then: ΑΛΕΥΡΑ. *Ἐνεκα τῆς ἀβεβαυτήστος τοῦ καιροῦ, τόσον οἱ κάρυοι δύον καὶ οἱ ἀγορασταὶ ἔδειξαν μεγίστην ἐπιφίλαξιν κατὰ τὴν παρελθούσαν ἔβδομάδα, αἱ τιμαὶ ὅμοι ὑψώθησαν κατὰ τὰς χθενιάς πληροφορίας ἀπὸ φρ. 60 μέχρι 65 κατὰ σάκ.* (*Flours.*—In consequence of the unsettled state of the weather, holders as well as buyers have displayed very great reserve during the past week; prices had risen, however, according to yesterday's accounts, from 60 to 65fr. per sack.) Isn't that the true business smack? Of course if you *will* be schoolboyish and translate "so much the holders as much as also the purchasers," &c., you may make it sound absurd; but there is nothing intrinsically queer in the Greek. Then we have ΣΙΤΟΙ (wheats), ΒΑΜΒΑΚΙΑ (cottons), ΚΑΦΕΔΕΣ (coffees), ΖΑΧΑΡΕΙΣ (sugars), ΑΛΕΙΜΜΑΤΑ (tallows), ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΑ (spirits), ΔΕΡΜΑΤΑ (hides), ΜΑΛΛΙΑ (wools), ΝΗΜΑΤΑ (yarns). Then we read that τὰ χειμερινὰ ὑφάσματα ἐξηγήθησαν πλειότερον (winter stuffs were more asked after), or that η ἀγορά εἶναι στάσιμος (the market is firm), or the old sad tale πολλοὶ τῶν ἐργατῶν κάθινται ἀργοὶ (many of the hands are out of work—there's no difficulty about translating that, it means that many men are starving); or we are a little cheered to find that τὸ μαυροπίπερον ἔξακολουθεῖ σταθερὸν εἰς τὴν προτέραν ὑπερτίμησιν (black pepper—like a good boy—continues steady at its former high price), together with useful information upon the subject of *ρούμια* (rum), κάκαος (cocoa), τήιον (tea), καφές (coffee), ὄργκιον (rice), ἀρώματα (spices), νίγρων (salt-petre), σάγος (sago), κοκκινήλη (cochineal), ὀστρακοβαθή (indigo), κάνναβις (hemp), ἔλαια (oils). And to those who are not commercially disposed, we would submit for their consideration and amusement the question how they would translate into Greek "the Prince of Wales's visit to Canada?" And then, when they had puzzled sufficiently over it, we would ask them whether they had any idea it would result in anything so curious (to look at) as Η ΕΙΣ ΚΑΝΑΔΑΝ ΕΠΙΣΚΕΨΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΙΓ-

ΓΝΗΠΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΟΥΕΛΣ! Could they, moreover, fancy a descendant in a direct line from Plato, writing: Διὰ τηλεγραφήματος ἀπὸ "Ἄγιον Ιωάννην" ἐμάθομεν ὅτι ὁ Πρίγγηψ τῶν Οὐελσ ἔφθασεν ἵγιας εἰς Νιουφουνδλανδίαν τὴν 23 τὸ ἐπέρας, καὶ ὅτι μεγάλαι προετιμασίαι ἔγινοντο πρὸς ὑποδοχὴν τῶν (By telegram from St. John, we learnt that the Prince of Wales arrived safely at Newfoundland on the 23rd, in the evening, and that great preparations were made to receive him)? At any rate the descendant of Plato follows the correct rule of composition enunciated by Mr. Shilleto, and gives us τηλεγράφημα like a Greek and not τηλέγραμμα like a scholar of Balliol. Nor let it be for one instant supposed that crinoline is unrepresented in the new-old language; but as the Grecian ladies of the olden time were sung of by the poets rather as βαθύκολποι than βαθύπνυοι, a word was to be invented. That was not difficult: κρυολίνη does well enough. Let us see how the Greek renders "the wadding struck the young woman and broke the steel hoops of her crinoline." Nothing can be simpler: τὸ στυπεῖον ἐκτίπησε τὴν νεανίδα καὶ ἔθρανσε τὸν χαλυβζίνους στεφάνους τῆς κρυολίνης.

Advertisements in Greek are particularly refreshing: we meet Benson's watches, or Ωρολόγια: we are notified that Χρυσᾶ πωλούνται ἀπὸ 4 ἔως 100 γκαίας, and Ἀργυρᾶ ἀπὸ 2 ἔως 50 γκαίας, and that τὰ ὄρολόγια στελλούνται πανταχοῦ διὲ ἔξδων τοῦ ὄρολογονοῦ (the watches are sent to all parts at the expense of the maker). There is here a slight departure (unless there be a misprint) from Greek accuracy, which would require πανταχοῖ or πανταχόστε. The Ρεβόλβια τοῦ Κόλτα (Colt's revolvers) also greet us, and appropriately near to them the Πένθιμα φορέσατα (or mourning garments) of Jay and Co. εἰς μετριωτάτην τιμὴν (at a very moderate price). The Κόλλα τοῦ Glenfield, or Glenfield starch, is also before our eyes, and Κύριος Γεώργιος Σκώτ (Mr. George Scot) recommends his Ἀκαδημία εἰς Alderley Edge πλησίον τῆς Μαγγεστρίας.

We hope we have now made it sufficiently apparent that the simple reading of modern Greek, particularly in the improved and purified form which is now gaining ground amongst the Hellenes, is a matter of tolerable ease to any one who is acquainted even with only the English system of teaching ancient Greek. The scholar will occasionally be shocked at the cases which certain prepositions are made to govern; but let him only make up his mind to bear it like a man, and he will soon become accustomed to it. Conversation will be a little more difficult, but pronunciation might be learnt in half an hour. The chief stumbling-block would be the fusions and clippings in which the modern Greeks indulge; for instance they say, καλημέρα σας, good day to you; τίπας or τίπατε (for τί είπατε or τί είπατε), what did you say? Then they use λέμμεν for λέγομεν, πάγω for ὑπάγω,

ἀψάρι for ὄψάριον, νερὸν for νερὸν, ψωμὶ for ψωμὶον, κ.τ.λ., though there appears to be an inclination now-a-days to use the old word ἄπρος instead of ψωμὶ. Bearing this in mind, we venture to say that any Englishman with a good knowledge of ancient Greek might, in three months, not only make himself understood by a modern Hellene, but (which is not so easy) also understand him, supposing him to belong to the educated class.

THE GREAT SOWER.

LINNÆUS, investigating the causes of the dissemination of the plants of one locality over the whole inhabitable earth, says "the first cause is the force or power of the air." "We must admire," he continues, "the providence of the Creator who sends his winds, especially in the autumn, to shake the trees and make their leaves and seeds fly like flakes of snow; these winds sweep also the surface of the earth, lift again and again the fallen seeds, and disperse them on every side until at last they may have been sent even to remote regions propitious to germination. It is scarcely a hundred years ago that a plant, indigenous to America, was brought to the Garden of Plants in Paris, from which its seeds have been dispersed by the winds over France, Italy, Sicily, Belgium, and Germany. The snapdragon (Antirrhinum) has been widely disseminated in the neighbourhood of Upsal, from a few plants sent to the Botanic Garden. It is to facilitate this dissemination by the air, that when the fruit has become ripe it is elevated on stalks or stems. For the same purpose most seed-vessels are open only at the top. The seeds do not fall on the ground at the foot of the mother plant; they can get out only when the seed-vessel, beaten by a very strong wind, is turned upside down, and they are dispersed on every side. The seed-vessel of henbane (Hyoscyamus) has a horizontal opening when the seeds become ripe, but this opening does not permit their egress unless the seed-vessel is violently shaken by the wind."

Other seeds when ripe are provided with hooks made to catch hold of passing animals, which, after a time, get rid of them by rolling on the ground. Those seeds which are surrounded by a succulent pulp, and are swallowed by birds and quadrupeds, are generally favourably consigned to the earth. Most seeds pass uninjured through the stomach and intestines of all animals, with the exception of gallinaceous fowls. Currant seeds, after having been eaten by man, can germinate. Foxes sow the seeds of the cranberry (Vaccinium) after eating its red berries. Apple and pear trees are often found in ditches and under hedges, proceeding, it is said, from fruit which has been devoured by peasants. Farmers are often astonished when, after having, as they think, perfectly prepared their fields, and sown excellent corn, on reaping they find some places covered only with useless oats.

In other cases, mammiferes and birds devour

only a portion of seeds, while the rest fall and become productive. When the squirrel shakes the cones of the pine-tree to obtain the seeds, a great number fall to the ground and are lost to him. The inhabitants of Iceland call a particular sort of nut "rats' nut," from the circumstance that the rats gather them in great numbers, and hide them in the ground. But as the rats are very often killed by one or other of their numerous enemies, the nuts are left to germinate. Seeds falling into worm-holes are sure to germinate, as well as seeds which drop into the subterraneous passages made by the moles to ensnare worms and insects. The hog, by tearing up the earth as with a ploughshare, prepares it for the reception of seeds; the hedgehog passes his life in doing the same service.

Linnæus says that in Lapony the power of rivers in dispersing seeds is seen very plainly. "I have found," he says, "on the banks of the rivers of that country, alpine plants, often at the distance of thirty leagues from their native soil. The ripe seeds of these alpine plants, swept away by the waters, after being carried longer or shorter distances along the course of these rivers, are at last thrown upon their banks, where they strike root."

Seas, also, have a great share in the transmission of seeds. It is generally believed that seeds, when steeped in water, become corrupt and unfruitful, but this is a mistake. The water of the sea has seldom sufficient heat to destroy seeds. For the same reason, fields are sometimes covered with water during a whole winter, and yet the seeds with which they were sown remain in good condition.

Linnæus thus describes the dissemination of the rose of Jericho. "Nature has wonderfully endowed the anastatica: while its seeds are being ripened, the branches which surround the fruit contract and seize it as in a fist, so putting the seeds beyond the reach of birds. This plant growing upon the sandy shores of the Red Sea, is exposed to the fury of the autumnal storms, when the sea beating violently upon the plant, seizes its fruit and hurls it into the deep; but the following tides throw it back upon the sandy beach. Now, this fruit has the property of remaining uninjured by cold sea water, but when this last has become lukewarm (which takes place when the fruit is left on the sand), the fruit swells, the branches which unfold it relax, the seeds are poured out, and, finding all that is necessary for germination, send forth their roots, and soon cover the whole coast with their verdure."

Some seeds when put into the earth germinate quickly, others more slowly; some even stay there a long and very variable time before they appear on the surface.

Linnæus says: "When but a boy, my father had given me a little garden within his own, where I reared all sorts of plants in great numbers. Among others, I remember very well a particular thistle, which for many years my father had in vain made every effort to destroy

completely: the same ground bringing forth every succeeding year new individuals of this detested species, although their predecessors had invariably been pulled up and burnt. I have now learned the cause of what appeared unaccountable to us then. It must have been the presence of latent seeds coming to light from time to time, as I know that these seeds, when consigned to the earth, may remain there during two, three, and even ten or twenty years without losing their power of germination."

A plant which had not been seen for forty years in the Botanical Garden of Upsal, reappeared there spontaneously in the year 1731 after the ground had been dug up. Another plant, a lobelia, reappeared and flourished in the Botanical Garden of Amsterdam, after lying buried in the earth twenty years. Cucumber seeds have been kept forty years, and even fifty years, without losing their germinative power. The railway excavations everywhere have brought to light, plants long supposed to be extinct.

Corn found in the ruins after the fire of London has been raised; wheat which has been enclosed in the wrappings of an Egyptian mummy has been reared, and has reproduced fruit in Germany; Indian corn taken from the tombs of the Incas has done the same thing in America. It has been observed that when the virgin forests of America have been burnt down, and the land ploughed up, an entirely new flora has appeared: a fact which has been accounted for, by the supposition that the seeds had been buried for ages, in depths beyond the reach of vegetation.

The ground or earth nut (*Arachis*) is the fruit of a plant growing in South America, not unlike our bean. After the flowers fall off, the young pods bend until they reach the ground, where they bury their seeds three or four inches under the soil. These nuts contain an extremely sweet fixed oil, like that of almonds, which, if they were allowed to ripen above ground, would become rancid and useless, and the seeds would not germinate when planted. The negroes of South Carolina make these earth nuts their principal food.

The seeds of the pine and fir trees are protected in a somewhat similar manner. On account of their oily nature, too much heat would be apt to make them rancid and sterile; therefore the scales of the cone, which, while the tree is in flower are spread out when the seed is ripe, close one over the other like the tiles of a roof, effectually shutting out the rain; and in proportion as winter approaches and the cold increases, the scales tighten more and more round the seeds they defend. About the beginning of April, when the returning sun sends forth his first warm rays, the scales of the cone open, and let the seeds fall to be received into the bosom of the tepid earth, where vernal showers soon draw out their roots.

The subterraneous pea (*Lathyrus subterraneum*) bears very few blossoms upon its flower-stalk, and still fewer fruits; but there

spring from the plant, white flower-stalks, having no leaves, and bearing not variegated coloured flowers like the others, but white ones. These white flowers produce fruit which is immediately consigned to the earth, and thus screened from devastation by birds. It would appear that the coloured flowers are for show, and the white flowers for use. The seeds of one of the clovers are protected in the same way.

Certain seeds, owing to a curious arrangement of their various parts, have a tendency to move about. If a seed of the plant called erupina (a kind of centaury) is placed in the palm of the hand, it will be sure to move off; and if put between the stocking and the back part of the foot, it will work its way over the whole body, and at last get out, either at the collar or at the sleeve. These movements are made by the erect and projecting bristles with which the seeds are armed, moving always in one direction, like feet. The seeds of the sterile oat (*Avena nuda*), after it has been gathered into the barn, will wander out of their seed-cups, and, if the weather is damp, march off in a body, like a regiment of flies to the nearest wall, where they will fix and take root. The explanation of this apparently marvellous phenomenon is extremely simple. Each grain is surmounted by a long spiral bristle or awn, which is very sensitive to every change of weather, and which lengthens or contracts according as the air is moist or dry. Thus, a forward motion is produced like a snail putting out its body and then pulling its shell after it. The seed is prevented from going backwards, by the small spines placed backwards covering the awn. If the seeds or spores of any of the ferns are dropped on a piece of paper and examined with a microscope, they are seen to jump about and disperse themselves like mites or small insects.

Some plants propagate by means of their roots and sprouts. The mangrove fig-tree (*Rhizophora mangle*) is found growing on the low marshy parts of all tropical sea-shores. The fruit germinates in the seed-cup while hanging on the tree, and grows downwards until it reaches the ground, where it takes root in the mud. Each plant in its turn multiplies and spreads in the same way; and Linnaeus asserts that a single plant, if preserved from destruction, would, in course of time, multiply so as to cover the entire inhabitable surface of our globe.

Linnaeus, keeping within reasonable limits, and calculating what would be the effect of a single plant producing constantly only two successful bearing seeds each season, finds that in twenty years there would be one hundred and ninety-one thousand two hundred individuals. "What then," he exclaims, "would be the astonishing effect of such a multiplication continued over more than six thousand years!"

About the year 1660, the Christian Fathers at Paris possessed a root of barley, bearing forty-nine stalks and more than eighteen thousand seeds. Ray counted thirty-two thousand seeds in a poppy-head, and three hundred and sixty

thousand on a tobacco-plant. Dodart is said to have counted five hundred and twenty-nine thousand seeds on a single elm-tree, and yet these plants are far from being the most fecund. The number of spores produced by a fern is almost incalculable.

A Monsieur Pouchet, Professor of Natural History at Rouen, and a zealous defender of the spontaneous generation theory (or, as it is now called, "heterogenia"), was annoyed by continually hearing statements and speculations about what the air might carry; and he resolved to find out what it did really carry. Having procured with the greatest care some dust from nooks and crannies on the tops of the towers and steeples of ancient Rouen, which, in all probability, no hand had touched since the mason placed the stones, M. Pouchet examined it with most scrupulous attention. He found, amidst much inorganic matter, more or less organic substances, and among these were always found minute seeds easily distinguishable by their microscopical characteristics. Respecting the power of the air and winds in transporting small bodies to enormous distances, it is unquestionably proved that in a great eruption of Vesuvius its ashes were carried into Bohemia, and the great Pacific Ocean; of course, then, the spores of fungi might be carried all round the world.

MY WILL.

SINCE I have no lands or houses,
And no hoarded golden store,
What can I leave those who love me
When they see my face no more?
Do not smile; I am not jesting,
Though my words sound gay and light,
Listen to me, dearest Alice,
I will make my will to-night.

First for Mabel, who will never
Let the dust of future years
Din the thought of me, but keep it
Brighter still—perhaps with tears;
In whose eyes whate'er I glance at,
Touch, or praise, will always shine,
Through a strange and sacred radiance,
By Love's charter, wholly mine;
She will never lend another
Slenderest link of thought I claim,
I will therefore to her keeping,
Leave my memory and my name.

Bertha will do truer service
To her kind than I have done,
So I leave to her young spirit
The long work I have begun.
Well! the threads are tangled, broken,
And the colours do not blend,
She will lend her earnest striving,
Both to finish and amend:
And, when it is all completed,
Strong with care and rich with skill,
Just because my hands began it,
She will love it better still.

Ruth shall have my dearest token,
The one link I dread to break,
The one duty that I live for,
She, when I am gone, will take.

Sacred is the trust I leave her,
Needing patience, prayer, and tears,
I have striven to fulfil it,
As she knows, these many years.
Sometimes hopeless, faint, and weary,
Yet a blessing shall remain
With the task, and Ruth will prize it
For my many hours of pain.

What must I leave for my Alice?
Nothing, love, to do or bear,
Nothing that can dim your blue eyes
With the slightest cloud of care;
I will leave my heart to love you
With the tender faith of old,
Still to comfort, warm, and light you,
Should your life grow dark or cold;
No one else, my child, can claim it;
If you find old scars of pain,
They were only wounds, my darling,
There is not, I trust, one stain.

Are my gifts indeed so worthless
Now the slender sum is told?
Well! I know not; years may bless them
With a nobler price than gold.
Am I poor? Ah, no, most wealthy!
Not in these poor gifts you take,
But in the true hearts that tell me
You will keep them for my sake.

UNIQUE PUBLISHING.

IN a shady corner of that incomprehensible Palais Royal miscellany, where magazines of sham jewellery are set out to view, and a thriving business is done in that way, and where Monsieur Lucullus is walking down eternally to dine with Monsieur Lucullus at the sign of the Three Provençal Brothers—where many-headed Heliogabalus rides rampant, and where bonnes, or nursery-maids, do mostly congregate, lies the modest tabernacle of M. Dentu, the famous pamphlet publisher, whence flutters forth, daily, clouds of Sybiline leaves, which shadow out obscurely the changes political of the awful Memnon of the Tuilleries. Under strange titles they fall rustling at the feet of astonished Parisians, who pick them up, and try to spell out what the oracle means to say. There is nothing that outrages the fitness of things in this function of M. Dentu's; and though one may whisper, lightly, "What on earth does he in this galley?" being thus awkwardly hedged in with incompatible kitchen batteries and aluminium ornaments, the locality is about the best in the whole great Pandemonium on the Seine.

But some thirty or forty years back this Aréa, whose sylvan deities are the faun Soyer and the satyr Carême, could scarcely boast so innocent a worship. There was then semi-annual bal masqué, day and night; there was then saturnalia in permanence; and those pretty gardens, round which run the shopkeeping arcades, were but the happy hunting-ground of vice and flaunting abomination. Overhead, at those bright windows, an premier, where smug restaurant sets you out the little table for the déjeuner at "fixed price," where, too, mounts soothingly the afternoon's music, discoursed by

Garde Impériale, were set out other tables, fatally green and dangerously smooth. And the bright windows being flung open to let in air to gasping fevered gamblers, sent down in exchange the rattle of the wheel and click of the rake. From the bright windows, too, have come down, in despair, lost men, impaled upon those gilded railings. The air was filled, not with the fragrance of flowers, but with reeking perfumes, as Lais and her sisterhood swept by, in unholy bands. It was a horrid medley of fluttering plumes, flaunting gauds, painted cheeks, wine, smoke, blood at times, brawls, misery, luxuriance, brazen impudence, and cringing servitude, this pastoral "royal palace," now almost rural in its innocence: a hideous sloughing sore, an open sewer in the heart of the city.

Now it came to pass that a young man, of ardent hopes and prodigious enthusiasm, and of some capital besides, was just then hesitating by which of the many professional gates he should enter into active life, and at last discovered in himself an irresistible vocation to become—a publisher. A publisher, of all professions! just as we read the traditional stories of notable men fighting in early stages with poverty, and such cruel impediments, and finally struggling into artists, poets, and philosophers. So our Ladvocat—for this was the name of the unique publisher—had some such elastic spirit in him. "It was there," as the late Mr. Sheridan once remarked of himself, needlessly strengthening his assertion with an adjuration; "and by (adjuration), it should come out!" This was the way it came out in M. Ladvocat's case. With a daring originality, the unique publisher determined to select for his place of business the most irregular of localities, and in this very hot-bed of Bohemia, the company of wantons and masquers was one morning surprised to find among them a curious intruder, who dealt in books. What scoffing must it have furnished to the two millinery ladies between whom he had pitched his tent, and who dealt in laces and general frippery, and did a little business of another character besides. It would be hard to count the number of times the well-worn saying of "How, in the Evil One's name, had he gotten into that galley?" passed from light to lighter lips. Yet there was the modest little tabernacle, and inside the young and aspiring knight—a very publishing Gideon. No doubt it fell out, as it had been prophesied to him by wise and dismally shaking heads, that the light masquers came to him, asking for Faublas and the *Liaisons Dangereuses*, and such indecorous literature. No doubt the Bohemians stopped before his windows, and had much remirth out of the serious matter exposed there. But the unique publisher inside, thrilling with a new faith, could bide his time, which he knew was at hand, and presently began to preach.

The old Grub-street tradition as to the relations between authors and publishers has prevailed to much the same degree in most capitals. These poor scribbling parents who have children to be brought into the world have had to sue humbly for the common accoucheur's offices.

The practitioners have driven cruel bargains; but in most cases the inky progeny have never seen the light, and die an undeveloped fetus. But the creed of our publisher was of another order. He chose to sue, not to be sued; he sought and was not sought. And going out into the highways and by-ways, ranging the slums, and scaling the loftiest garrets, where writing men did mostly congregate, and chanting as he went a genuine *Excelsior!* and calling on the brave, the beautiful, and, above all, the young, the chivalrous publisher seized the first bundle of MSS., placed in his hands with timorous hesitation, and courageously performed his first clinical operation. Within a few days, there was in his window the famous *Messénienes*, of an obscure youth called ALFRED DE VIGNY, and in a few days all Paris was rushing frantically to buy. In this blindfold lottery he had drawn a prize, and gold poured into his coffers. The poet was devoured, and the unique publisher began to be talked of.

Radiant with success, he stands at his door, and watches the people going by. Presently there passes a young man of good address, very handsome, with genius written upon his brow, but with the ugly characters of reduced circumstances also written upon his person. The unique publisher marks him at once. "Young man," he says, "it strikes me that I see in your pocket that sort of swelling which a bundle of manuscript is likely to produce. Permit me. Ha! so it is! tied up with a bit of blue ribbon, too! Courage, friend; let us look it over together. *ODES AND BALLADS!* 'H'm! The Loves of the Angels—by Jove! Excellent! the very thing! Step inside, my friend—quick! You must give me this—rather, let me buy it of you."

The bargain was made. Again had the unique publisher drawn a prize. The reduced young poet's name happened to be a certain VICTOR HUGO; and again the public came, gathering up its skirts as it passed through the unclean throng, to buy frantically.

When it became known that there was a chevaleresque publisher in the city inclined to do business on such unheard-of principles, there must have set in such a rush of youths freighted with manuscripts tied up in blue ribbon, as would have reduced any less elastic spirit to despair. But the unique publisher held on to the unique track he had chosen. He was successful, too, because he had succeeded; for nothing, according to the well-worn canon, succeeds like success. All his proceedings, too, were of the same liberal character. Five or six copies of his favourite poets always lay cut upon the counter, with chairs set ready, for the public to enter and read, not buy, unless they fancied it specially. He almost preferred to give a volume away, rather than sell it; and set curiously high prices upon his works. Naturally, the unique publisher became the talk of Paris, and presently became the rage. He grew rich; and the Boulevards were soon astonished by the unusual spectacle of a publisher flying by in a superb cabriolet, with his

arms (a publisher's arms!) emblazoned on the panels. People looked up from their little tables outside the cafés, and said to each other with wonder, "It is the unique publisher."

Endless were the stories that went round of his revolutionary principles. How widows came to him in deep mourning, to tell with tears how they had been refused a miserable forty pounds for their husbands' poems. "Astonishing, madam!" exclaims the sympathising and unique publisher. "A shame! a disgrace! Do me the honour to accept this trifle, of say, three hundred. I am exceedingly indebted to you for this preference—I am indeed!" For the copyright of Chateaubriand's works, he gave five and twenty thousand pounds, and celebrated the contract by a superb entertainment to that viscount and his friends, in a superb hotel, such as publisher, unique or other, had never dwelt in before now. He revelled in what are called in France "luxurious editions," in the dissipation of costly papers and the most exquisite type. He gloried in monster undertakings, what are called "heavy" in the trade, series of sixteen and twenty tomes. They were his Austerlitz and Marengo, to which he would point with pride.

But one day when he was advanced in life, there came his Waterloo, and he sank crushed by his own speculations. Perhaps, the hotel, the cabriolet, and the entertainments to noble viscounts had something to do with the catastrophe; more likely it was the unwieldy proportions of his enterprises. The little shop in the Palais Royal, fondly looked back to, did not witness this decadence. It had long been exchanged for the stately hotel, where the banquets had been given to distinguished guests. But, with the banquets it had now faded away, like a tinsel pantomime structure; and it actually came to this sad end, that the poor unique, beaten at last by fortune, was glad to yield up his spirit upon a settle-bed in the dismal ward of a public hospital.

THE UNCOMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

THE rising of the Italian people from under their unutterable wrongs, and the tardy burst of day upon them after the long long night of oppression that has darkened their beautiful country, has naturally caused my mind to dwell often of late on my own small wanderings in Italy. Connected with them, is a curious little drama, in which the character I myself sustained was so very subordinate, that I may relate its story without any fear of being suspected of self-display. It is strictly a true story.

I am newly arrived one summer evening, in a certain small town on the Mediterranean. I have had my dinner at the inn, and I and the mosquitoes are coming out into the streets together. It is far from Naples; but a bright brown plump little woman-servant at the inn, is a Neapolitan, and is so vivaciously expert in pantomimic action, that in the single moment of answering my request to have a

pair of shoes cleaned which I left up-stairs, she plies imaginary brushes, and goes completely through the motions of polishing the shoes up, and laying them at my feet. I smile at the brisk little woman in perfect satisfaction with her briskness; and the brisk little woman, amiably pleased with me because I am pleased with her, clasps her hands and laughs delightfully. We are in the inn yard. As the little woman's bright eyes sparkle on the cigarette I am smoking, I make bold to offer her one; she accepts it none the less merrily, because I touch a most charming little dimple in her fat cheek, with its light paper end. Glancing up at the many green lattices to assure herself that the mistress is not looking on, the little woman then puts her two little dimpled arms a-kinbo, and stands on tiptoe to light her cigarette at mine. "And now, dear little sir," says she, puffing out smoke in a most innocent and Cherubic manner, "keep quite straight on, take the first to the right, and probably you will see him standing at his door."

I have a commission to "him," and I have been inquiring about him. I have carried the commission about Italy, several months. Before I left England, there came to me one night a certain generous and gentle English nobleman (he is dead in these days when I relate the story), and exiles have lost their best British friend), with this request: "Whenever you come to such a town, will you seek out one Giovanni Carlavero, who keeps a little wine-shop there, mention my name to him suddenly, and observe how it affects him?" I accepted the trust, and am on my way to discharge it.

The sirocco has been blowing all day, and it is a hot unwholesome evening with no cool sea-breeze. Mosquitoes and fire-flies are lively enough, but most other creatures are faint. The coquettish airs of pretty young women in the tiniest and wickedest of dolls' straw hats, who lean out at opened lattice blinds, are almost the only airs stirring. Very ugly and haggard old women with distaffs, and with a grey tow upon them that looks as if they were spinning out their own hair (I suppose they were once pretty, too, but it is very difficult to believe so), sit on the footway leaning against house walls. Everybody who has come for water to the fountain, stays there, and seems incapable of any such energetic idea as going home. Vespers are over, though not so long but that I can smell the heavy resinous incense as I pass the church. No man seems to be at work, save the coppersmith. In an Italian town he is always at work, and always thumping in the deadliest manner.

I keep straight on, and come in due time to the first on the right: a narrow dull street, where I see a well-favoured man of good stature and military bearing, in a great cloak, standing at a door. Drawing nearer to this threshold, I see it is the threshold of a small wine-shop; and I can just make out, in the dim light, the inscription that it is kept by Giovanni Carlavero.

I touch my hat to the figure in the cloak, and

pass in, and draw a stool to a little table. The lamp (just such another as they dig out of Pompeii) is lighted, but the place is empty. The figure in the cloak has followed me in, and stands before me.

"The master?"

"At your service, sir."

"Please to give me a glass of the wine of the country."

He turns to a little counter, to get it. As his striking face is pale, and his action is evidently that of an enfeebled man, I remark that I fear he has been ill. It is not much, he courteously and gravely answers, though bad while it lasts : the fever.

As he sets the wine on the little table, to his manifest surprise I lay my hand on the back of his, look him in the face, and say in a low voice : "I am an Englishman, and you are acquainted with a friend of mine. Do you recollect —?" and I mention the name of my generous countryman.

Instantly, he utters a loud cry, bursts into tears, and falls on his knees at my feet, clasping my legs in both his arms and bowing his head to the ground.

Some years ago, this man at my feet, whose overfraught heart is heaving as if it would burst from his breast, and whose tears are wet upon the dress I wear, was a galley-slave in the North of Italy. He was a political offender, having been concerned in the then last rising, and was sentenced to imprisonment for life. That he would have died in his chains, is certain, but for the circumstance that the Englishman happened to visit his prison.

It was one of the vile old prisons of Italy, and a part of it was below the waters of the harbour. The place of his confinement was an arched underground and under-water gallery, with a grill-gate at the entrance, through which it received such light and air as it got. Its condition was insufferably foul, and a stranger could hardly breathe in it, or see in it with the aid of a torch. At the upper end of this dungeon, and consequently in the worst position, as being the furthest removed from light and air, the Englishman first beheld him, sitting on an iron bedstead to which he was chained by a heavy chain. His countenance impressed the Englishman as having nothing in common with the faces of the malefactors with whom he was associated, and he talked with him, and learnt how he came to be there.

When the Englishman emerged from the dreadful den into the light of day, he asked his conductor, the governor of the gaol, why Giovanni Carlavero was put into the worst place?

"Because he is particularly recommended," was the stringent answer.

"Recommended, that is to say, for death?"

"Excuse me; particularly recommended," was again the answer.

"He has a bad tumour in his neck, no doubt occasioned by the hardship of his miserable life. If it continues to be neglected, and he remains where he is, it will kill him."

"Excuse me, I can do nothing. He is particularly recommended."

The Englishman was staying in that town, and he went to his home there; but the figure of this man chained to the bedstead made it no home, and destroyed his rest and peace. He was an Englishman of an extraordinarily tender heart, and he could not bear the picture. He went back to the prisongate: went back again and again, and talked to the man and cheered him. He used his utmost influence to get the man unchained from the bedstead, were it only for ever so short a time in the day, and permitted to come to the grate. It took a long time, but the Englishman's station, personal character, and steadiness of purpose, wore out opposition so far, and that grace was at last accorded. Through the bars, when he could thus get light upon the tumour, the Englishman lanced it, and it did well, and healed. His strong interest in the prisoner had greatly increased by this time, and he formed the desperate resolution that he would exert his utmost self-devotion and use his utmost efforts, to get Carlavero pardoned.

If the prisoner had been a brigand and a murderer, if he had committed every non-political crime in the Newgate Calendar and out of it, nothing would have been easier than for a man of any court or priestly influence to obtain his release. As it was, nothing could have been more difficult. Italian authorities, and English authorities who had interest with them, alike assured the Englishman that his object was hopeless. He met with nothing but evasion, refusal, and ridicule. His political prisoner became a joke in the place. It was especially observable that English Circumlocution, and English Society on its travels, were as humorous on the subject as Circumlocution and Society may be on any subject without loss of caste. But, the Englishman possessed (and proved it well in his life) a courage very uncommon among us : he had not the least fear of being considered a bore, in a good humane cause. So he went on persistently trying, and trying, and trying, to get Giovanni Carlavero out. That prisoner had been rigorously re-chained, after the tumour operation, and it was not likely that his miserable life could last very long.

One day, when all the town knew about the Englishman and his political prisoner, there came to the Englishman, a certain sprightly Italian Advocate of whom he had some knowledge; and he made this strange proposal. "Give me a hundred pounds to obtain Carlavero's release. I think I can get him a pardon, with that money. But I cannot tell you what I am going to do with the money, nor must you ever ask me for an account of the money if I fail." The Englishman decided to hazard the hundred pounds. He did so, and heard not another word of the matter. For half a year and more, the Advocate made no sign, and never once "took on" in any way, to have the subject on his mind. The Englishman was then obliged

to change his residence to another and more famous town in the North of Italy. He parted from the poor prisoner with a sorrowful heart, as from a doomed man for whom there was no release but Death.

The Englishman lived in his new place of abode another half-year and more, and had no tidings of the wretched prisoner. At length, one day, he received from the Advocate a cool concise mysterious note, to this effect. "If you still wish to bestow that benefit upon the man in whom you were once interested, send me fifty pounds more, and I think it can be ensured." Now, the Englishman had long settled in his mind that the Advocate was a heartless sharper, who had preyed upon his credulity and his interest in an unfortunate sufferer. So, he sat down and wrote a dry answer, giving the Advocate to understand that he was wiser now than he had been formerly, and that no more money was extractable from his pocket.

He lived outside the city gates, some mile or two from the post-office, and was accustomed to walk into the city with his letters and post them himself. On a lovely spring day, when the sky was exquisitely blue, and the sea Divinely beautiful, he took his usual walk, carrying this letter to the Advocate in his pocket. As he went along, his gentle heart was much moved by the loveliness of the prospect, and by the thought of the slowly-dying prisoner chained to the bedstead, for whom the universe had no delights. As he drew nearer and nearer to the city where he was to post the letter, he became very uneasy in his mind. He debated with himself, was it remotely possible, after all, that this sum of fifty pounds could restore the fellow-creature whom he pitied so much, and for whom he had striven so hard, to liberty? He was not a conventionally rich Englishman—very far from that—but he had a spare fifty pounds at the banker's. He resolved to risk it. Without doubt, God has recompensed him for the resolution.

He went to the banker's, and got a bill for the amount, and enclosed it in a letter to the Advocate that I wish I could have seen. He simply told the Advocate that he was quite a poor man, and that he was sensible it might be a great weakness in him to part with so much money on the faith of so vague a communication; but that there it was, and that he prayed the Advocate to make a good use of it. If he did otherwise no good could ever come of it, and it would lie heavy on his soul one day.

Within a week, the Englishman was sitting at his breakfast, when he heard some suppressed sounds of agitation on the staircase, and Giovanni Carlavero leaped into his room and fell upon his breast, a free man!

Conscious of having wronged the Advocate in his own thoughts, the Englishman wrote him an earnest and grateful letter, avowing the fact, and entreating him to confide by what means and through what agency he had succeeded so well. The Advocate returned for answer through the post. "There are many things, as you know, in this Italy of ours, that are safest and

best not even spoken of—far less written of. We may meet some day, and then I may tell you what you want to know; not here, and now." But, the two never did meet again. The Advocate was dead when the Englishman gave me my trust; and how the man had been set free, remained as great a mystery to the Englishman, and to the man himself, as it was to me.

But, I knew this:—here was the man, this sultry night, on his knees at my feet, because I was the Englishman's friend; here were his tears upon my dress; here were his sobs choking his utterance; here were his kisses on my hands, because they had touched the hands that had worked out his release. He had no need to tell me it would be happiness to him to die for his benefactor; I doubt if I ever saw real, sterling, fervent gratitude of soul, before or since.

He was much watched and suspected, he said, and had had enough to do to keep himself out of trouble. This, and his not having prospered in his worldly affairs, had led to his having failed in his usual communications to the Englishman for—as I now remember the period—some two or three years. But, his prospects were brighter, and his wife who had been very ill had recovered, and his fever had left him, and he had bought a little vineyard, and would I carry to his benefactor the first of its wine? Ay, that I would (I told him with enthusiasm), and not a drop of it should be spilled or lost!

He had cautiously closed the door before speaking of himself, and had talked with such excess of emotion, and in a provincial Italian so difficult to understand, that I had more than once been obliged to stop him, and beg him to have compassion on me and be slower and calmer. By degrees he became so, and tranquilly walked back with me to the hotel. There, I sat down before I went to bed and wrote a faithful account of him to the Englishman: which I concluded by saying that I would bring the wine home, against any difficulties, every drop.

Early next morning when I came out at the hotel door to pursue my journey, I found my friend waiting with one of those immense bottles in which the Italian peasants store their wine—a bottle holding some half-dozen gallons—bound round with basket-work for greater safety on the journey. I see him now, in the bright sunlight, tears of gratitude in his eyes, proudly inviting my attention to this corpulent bottle. (At the street corner hard by, two high-flavoured able-bodied monks—pretending to talk together, but keeping their four evil eyes upon us.)

How the bottle had been got there, did not appear; but the difficulty of getting it into the ramshackle vetturino carriage in which I was departing, was so great, and it took up so much room when it was got in, that I elected to sit outside. The last I saw of Giovanni Carlavero was his running through the town by the side of the jingling wheels, clasping my hand as I stretched

it down from the box, charging me with a thousand last loving and dutiful messages to his dear patron, and finally looking in at the bottle as it reposed inside, with an admiration of its honourable way of travelling that was beyond measure delightful.

And now, what disquiet of mind this dearly-beloved and highly-treasured Bottle began to cost me, no man knows. It was my precious charge through a long tour, and, for hundreds of miles, I never had it off my mind by day or by night. Over bad roads—and they were many—I clung to it with affectionate desperation. Up mountains, I looked in at it and saw it helplessly tilting over on its back, with terror. At innumerable inn doors when the weather was bad, I was obliged to be put into my vehicle before the Bottle could be got in, and was obliged to have the Bottle lifted out before human aid could come near me. The Imp of the same name, except that his associations were all evil and these associations were all good, would have been a less troublesome travelling companion. I might have served Mr. Cruikshank as a subject for a new illustration of the miseries of the Bottle. The National Temperance Society might have made a powerful Tract of me.

The suspicions that attached to this innocent Bottle, greatly aggravated my difficulties. It was like the apple-pie in the child's book. Parma pouted at it, Modena mocked it, Tuscany tackled it, Naples nibbled it, Rome refused it, Austria accused it, Soldiers suspected it, Jesuits jobbed it. I composed a neat Oration, developing my inoffensive intentions in connexion with this Bottle, and delivered it in an infinity of guard-houses, at a multitude of town gates, and on every drawbridge, angle, and rampart, of a complete system of fortifications. Fifty times a day, I got down to harangue an infuriated soldiery about the Bottle. Through the filthy degradation of the abject and vile Roman States, I had as much difficulty in working my way with the Bottle, as if it had bottled up a complete system of heretical theology. In the Neapolitan country, where everybody was a spy, a soldier, a priest, or a lazzarone, the shameless beggars of all four denominations incessantly pounced on the Bottle and made it a pretext for extorting money from me. Quires—quires do I say? Reams—of forms illegibly printed on whitish-brown paper were filled up about the Bottle, and it was the subject of more stamping and sanding than I had ever seen before. In consequence of which haze of sand, perhaps, it was always irregular, and always latent with dismal penalties of going back, or not going forward, which were only to be abated by the silver crossing of a base hand, poked shirtless out of a ragged uniform sleeve. Under all discouragements, however, I stuck to my Bottle, and held firm to my resolution that every drop of its contents should reach the Bottle's destination.

The latter refinement cost me a separate heap of troubles on its own separate account. What corkscrews did I see the military power bring out against that Bottle: what gimlets, spikes,

divining rods, gauges, and unknown tests and instruments! At some places, they persisted in declaring that the wine must not be passed, without being opened and tasted; I, pleading to the contrary, used them to argue the question seated on the Bottle lest they should open it in spite of me. In the southern parts of Italy, more violent shrieking, face-making, and gesticulating, greater vehemence of speech and countenance and action, went on about that Bottle than would attend fifty murders in a northern latitude. It raised important functionaries out of their beds, in the dead of night. I have known half a dozen military lanterns to disperse themselves at all points of a great sleeping Piazza, each lantern summoning some official creature to get up, put on his cocked-hat instantly, and come and stop the Bottle. It was characteristic that while this innocent Bottle had such immense difficulty in getting from little town to town, Signor Mazzini and the fiery cross were traversing Italy from end to end.

Still, I stuck to my Bottle, like any fine old English gentleman all of the olden time. The more the Bottle was interfered with, the stauncher I became (if possible) in my first determination that my countryman should have it delivered to him intact, as the man whom he had so nobly restored to life and liberty had delivered it to me. If ever I have been obstinate in my days—and I may have been, say, once or twice—I was obstinate about the Bottle. But, I made it a rule always to keep a pocket full of small coin at its service, and never to be out of temper in its cause. Thus I and the Bottle made our way. Once, we had a break-down; rather a bad break-down, on a steep high place with the sea below us, on a tempestuous evening when it blew great guns. We were driving four wild horses abreast, Southern fashion, and there was some little difficulty in stopping them. I was outside, and not thrown off; but no words can describe my feelings when I saw the Bottle—travelling inside, as usual—burst the door open, and roll obesely out into the road. A blessed Bottle with a charmed existence, he took no hurt, and we repaired damage, and went on triumphant.

A thousand representations were made to me that the Bottle must be left at this place, or that, and called for again. I never yielded to one of them, and never parted from the Bottle, on any pretence, consideration, threat, or entreaty. I had no faith in any official receipt for the Bottle, and nothing would induce me to accept one. These unmanageable politics at last brought me and the Bottle, still triumphant, to Genoa. There, I took a tender and reluctant leave of him for a few weeks, and consigned him to a trusty English captain, to be conveyed to the Port of London by sea.

While the Bottle was on his voyage to England, I read the Shipping Intelligence as anxiously as if I had been an underwriter. There was some stormy weather after I myself had got to England by way of Switzerland and France,

and my mind greatly misgave me that the Bottle might be wrecked. At last to my great joy, I received notice of his safe arrival, and immediately went down to Saint Katharine's Docks, and found him in a state of honourable captivity in the Custom House.

The wine was mere vinegar when I set it down before the generous Englishman—probably it had been something like vinegar when I took it up from Giovanni Carlavero—but not a drop of it was spilled or gone. And the Englishman told me, with much emotion in his face and voice, that he had never tasted wine that seemed to him so sweet and sound. And long afterwards, the Bottle graced his table. And the last time I saw him in this world that misses him, he took me aside in a crowd, to say, with his amiable smile: "We were talking of you only to-day at dinner, and I wished you had been there, for I had some claret up in Carlavero's Bottle."

MUCH BETTER THAN SHAKESPEARE.

An ignorant British public has long taken it for granted that Shakespeare wrote the play of Hamlet. It is time the confiding public should be undeceived, and forced by direct evidence to acknowledge that, although Shakespeare did indeed supply certain crude materials for a play of that name—materials incongruous, wild, and full of anachronisms—the real play, shaped, squared, and harmoniously arranged according to the Unities, was written by DUCIS, and first played at the Théâtre-Français in Paris, in seventeen hundred and sixty-nine.

It is to be hoped that an obstinate British public will not pretend ignorance of the name of DUCIS; this would exhibit the national prejudice against foreigners in a deplorable light, and, moreover, would show an ingratitude and a want of appreciation of a great literary service, unworthy of a generous people. Our own duty, however, as faithful exponents of a fact not universally acknowledged, obliges us as a matter of routine to state that Jean François DUCIS was born at Versailles in seventeen hundred and thirty-three; that he was the associate and friend of Thomas and of Florian; that he succeeded Voltaire in the fauteuil of the Académie Française in seventeen hundred and seventy-nine; that besides writing an infinite number of epistles and minor poems, he performed the kind office of reconstructing in French, and in accordance with the Unities, the mass of incongruities collected by Shakespeare as plays, and called Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, King Lear, Macbeth, King John, Othello. He did something of the same kind for Sophocles with his play of Oedipus, although Sophocles ought certainly to have known all about the Unities himself.

The complete works of DUCIS were collected for the first time in eighteen hundred and eighteen, two years after his death; and the enthusiastic editor of an edition published at

Brussels by Wahlen and Company, imperial publishers, explains the whole state of the case, as between Shakespeare and DUCIS so clearly, and to an unprejudiced British mind with such ingenuous fairness, that I cannot do better than lay his exposition at the outset before the reader:

"Shakespeare, almost entirely debarred of education, writing in the midst of a still barbarous people, in language scarcely formed, and for a stage utterly without order, was either ignorant of, or disdained those rules, and that dramatic affinity, the observance of which distinguishes our theatre; and what is perhaps more grievous, he often allied with the truest and most exalted beauties, now the fault of obscenity, and now the vice of affectation. DUCIS, with an art which would have been more appreciated if the difficulties of the enterprise had been better understood, reduced to proportion, and subdued to the established laws of our dramatic system, the gigantic and monstrous works of the English dramatist. He knew how to separate the pure and sublime traits from the impure alloy which dishonoured them, and to render them with that force, that warmth, that truth of expression, which associates—nay, which almost places on an equality—the rights of imitative talent with those of original genius. Indeed, how much of bold and profound thought, of touching and elevated sentiment, has he added to that furnished to him by his model!"

Fortunately, no dead poet is responsible for the enthusiasm of his live editor, and in spite of the above trumpet-blast of panegyric, we firmly believe that DUCIS was a modest and amiable poet. That he possessed some of the best qualities of a man, is shown by the fact that after having been attached to the service of Monsieur, afterwards Louis the Eighteenth, as Secrétaire des Commandements (whatever that may have been), he refused, although then reduced to poverty, the position and emolument of senator, offered to him by Napoleon. When pressed by a friend to accept the lucrative sinecure, he replied: "I have always consulted my interests but little, and my distastes a great deal. Besides, when I come to look upon the gold lace with which the Solliciteur-Général is adorned, I am quite sure I could never bring myself to wear that coat."

There must be a subtle refinement necessary for the thorough enjoyment of the Unities, to which we Englishmen cannot lay much claim. We must either be very dull, or diseasedly imaginative, when our play-going nature does not insist upon the reproduction of an event on the stage in precisely the same number of minutes which its action would occupy in reality; and when we are indifferent to the apparent annihilation of both time and space, in order to work out a good story. It is doubtful, indeed, whether the best of us would not prefer the Life of a Gamester, with a lapse of five years between each act, to the classical severity of Cato. Only this much may be said in our favour: that Corneille, in *The Cid*, one of his best plays, broke through the Unities more than once—perhaps it was on that account the Académie rejected the piece—and that the classical model

upon which the old French dramatists built their epics has but few modern disciples.

For our own part, we confess to the vulgar want of capacity for the thorough appreciation of the Unities. We have a lugubrious recollection of the performance of *Hamlet* at the Théâtre-Français: the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare, by Ducus. We came away from that elevated representation full of Ducus—and dreariness.

But let us take the play as it is writ, and see what the Unities have done for it. In order to do justice to Ducus we must first forget Shakespeare. The simplicity of the play, according to the Unities, is astonishing. There is but one scene in the whole tragedy, and that is at "Elsinore, in the palace of the kings of Denmark." The first act sets us right with regard to some of our old friends. Hamlet is king, not prince, of Denmark, consequent upon the sudden death of his father. Claudius, "first prince of the blood," is conspiring the king's overthrow, assisted by that pleasant old gentleman whom we delight to hear called a "fishmonger," Polonius, now active as a cool, villainous conspirator, of middle age, and without a spark of eccentricity about him. This precious pair are quite agreed that Hamlet, the king, from some cause unexplained, is "silent, sad, morose," half dead, and more than half insane; and this view of his case they have impressed upon their co-conspirators as a sufficient reason for his overthrow. Claudius has, besides, some special grievances against the old king, inasmuch as his late majesty had never properly appreciated his military services, and had even disgraced him at court. Worse than this, he had decreed that the beautiful Ophelia,

The sole and feeble scion of my race,
exclaims Claudius, "should never marry." Here is a correction! Ophelia is the daughter of Claudius, not of Polonius, "O Jephtha, judge of Israel!" This determination on the part of the late king, that Ophelia

The light of hymen's torch should ne'er behold, creates an agreeable complication which the readers of Shakespeare will be quite unprepared for, and as it can scarcely be called justifiable, excites a sort of sympathy in the audience for Claudius which assists in the general bewilderment.

Polonius, in his heavy villainy, suggests to Claudius that, as the queen-mother, Gertrude, doubtless intends that he should take the place of her dead husband, a refusal might jeopardise the whole plot; upon which Claudius explains that he is about to make an offer of himself at once to the queen, not in earnest, but as a blind till the conspiracy shall be ripe for execution. Gertrude opportunely enters; Polonius discreetly retires; and Claudius makes his proposal, with considerable formality, however, seeing that his offer is set in Alexandrine verse, and in rhyme. The queen is in no humour for love; seized with remorse for the murder of her husband, in which she had assisted, she reproves Claudius for this

expression of his passion so soon after the death of the king:

Upon whose dust, within an urn enclosed,
The darkness of the tomb has scarcely closed.

Here we have the first intimation of the jar business, which afterwards assumes such formidable proportions.

The queen, in her repentance, has become so thoroughly virtuous, that she repudiates all thought of marriage; declares herself resolved to devote her life in future to the welfare of her son, King Hamlet, and directs Polonius, who is called upon the stage for the purpose, to give immediate orders for his coronation. This disposed of, there enters Elvire, who is the confidante of Gertrude—somehow they never can get on without a confidante in the Unities—and who comes to announce the arrival of Norceste: Norceste, the dread of the conspirators, the hope of the queen-mother, and the dear friend of Hamlet. Norceste, indeed, is no other than our old crony Horatio, with new powers, who has just hastened from England to comfort and assist Hamlet on the death of his father.

An episode is now introduced in the shape of a revelation on the part of the queen-mother of her share in the murder of the late king. This is partly extorted from her by Elvire, who had beheld Gertrude in her throes of anguish, and being in her innocent stupidity unable to define the cause, presses the queen for an explanation. Gertrude confesses that Claudius had been her first love, but that, for state reasons, she had married the king. Upon the return of the victorious Claudius from the wars, her first passion had been reawakened, and the slights cast upon him by her husband had increased her love for the one while they had excited an aversion for the other. At a time when the king was sick, and craved refreshing drinks, Claudius prepared a "perfidious cup" of poison for his especial solacement, and committed it to the hands of the too willing Gertrude, his wife, to be given to him. She, poor, weak woman, at the sight of the haggard face of her sick husband, repented of her purpose:

My blood froze up; of reason's power denied,
I fled—but left the chalice by his side.

As a natural consequence of which oversight, the fevered thirsty king, on waking, drank up the poison and died.

Norceste (Horatio) now arrives upon the scene to find the king dead and buried—that is to say inurned; confusion and gloom in the court; and his old companion, Hamlet, afflicted with all the signs of incipient madness. Upon this state of matters he makes the bold reflection:

In court suspicion only waits its time;
A mighty secret there is oft a mighty crime.

The interview between Hamlet and Norceste brings Shakespeare faintly before our eyes. Hamlet has only seen the spirit of his father in imagination. Twice he has dreamed of him, and on the latter occasion the angry apparition

had accused him of neglecting to avenge his murder, and thus censured and instructed him :

Is it enough thy tears should wet my dust?
Go! take the urn wherein my bones are thrust,
Then seize thy poniard, strike! thy steps retrace,
And, smoking still, my ashes then replace.

To digress a moment on this matter of the urn. Is it not a question whether the Unities, in correcting the anachronisms of Shakespeare, have not themselves committed a greater one, seeing it is not historically proven that the Danes were in the habit of burning their dead relatives, and of putting them in this way? The idea is so classical that I suppose it must be accepted without a murmur; or perhaps it was an exceptional proceeding adopted by the cunning Claudius to efface the traces of poison; in which supposition, what a pity it is the case never came to be tried at the Old Bailey, that the analytical chemists might have come out in full feather! What an interesting chapter in the *Causes Célèbres* of the Newgate Calendar would it have afforded!

Norcestre, like a sensible man, pooh-poohs the notion of the spiritual visitation of the feu roi, which he imputes to the heated imagination of Hamlet, acted upon by the story of the death of the King of England, who had just then, conveniently enough, been found stabbed in his bed. The ghost, in the dream of Hamlet, had accused his " perfidious mother" and the " infamous Claudius" of being the joint murderers of his body; and the idea now occurs to Hamlet that the recital of the murder of the King of England to the guilty pair, by Norcestre, may awaken such remorse in their consciences as to betray them by some visible emotion. And this is how the Unities dispose of the grand episode of the play! To them the play is not "the thing," as being out of time, and the players out of place as a troublesome mob. Hamlet imposes another task upon Norcestre. He is anxious for the possession of the urn :

I would that here before the poisoners' eyes
My father's ashes should accusing rise;
And of thy faithful love the kindness bless
That to my heart his sacred urn I press.

In the mean time the two vulgar conspirators, Claudius and Polonius, are becoming seriously alarmed lest their plots should, by the inopportune arrival of Norcestre, and the éclat of the coronation, become impossible of execution. They resolve, therefore, to watch the one and interrupt the other. Polonius is for action. The attempt to surprise Claudius and the queen into an implied confession of their guilt by the narration of the murder of the King of England, turns out a complete failure, so far as Claudius is concerned, who keeps his countenance like a consummate hypocrite as he is, and has only a partial success with the queen. This troubles Hamlet, and we then have a speech in which, after some difficulty, we discover a faint trace of the soliloquy on death, but oh, how faint! Ophelia here appears for the first time on the stage. As she is the daughter of Claudius, and

not of Polonius, the garrulous old chamberlain of Shakespeare; as she never goes mad; never sings sweet melancholy songs; is never drowned, and, consequently, never buried, all resemblance between her and the original is entirely lost; and the Unities, by this means, dispose at once of Laertes, of the grave, the skulls, and the gravediggers; and the heavy drama groans on its dreary methodical course to the end.

In the fifth act Norcestre appears with the urn. It is blue, and of a dropsical shape. He commands it to the tears and embraces of Hamlet. The latter thus addresses it :

Thou pledge of all my vows, urn terrible, yet dear, Thee, weeping, I invoke, and yet embrace with fear.

Ophelia, in this scene, endeavours to soften the heart of Hamlet by appealing to his love for her, but failing in the attempt, she assumes the tragedy-queen tone, and exclaims :

My duty from this hour is parallel to thine,
Thou wouldest avenge thy father—I must succour
mine.

Hamlet, still doubtful of the queen's guilt, and of the credibility of the spectre's story, is resolved to "swear" his mother on the urn. This scene is very impressive, and the best in the play. Gertrude is unequal to the ordeal, and faints at the foot of the urn when about falsely to attest her innocence. In this scene, and in one other, Hamlet is supposed to see the ghost of his father, and even speaks to it, but the spectre forms no part of the dramatic personæ, and is no more than an "air-drawn dagger," invisible to the audience. The climax approaches. Claudius attacks the palace with his conspirators, and forces his way upon the scene, restrained only by Norcestre and his faithful followers. Norcestre plants himself, sword in hand, before Hamlet :

Norcestre. Save Hamlet, people!

Claudius. Soldiers, seize your prize!

Hamlet. Thou comest, monster, here thyself to sacrifice!

Behold this urn!

Claudius. What then?

Hamlet. Within there lie

The ashes of thy king. Thou, his assassin!

Claudius. 1!

Hamlet. Yes, thou, barbarian! Prepare thy thoughts to die.

The Unities are too proper in behaviour to state distinctly that Hamlet stabs Claudius, but "he draws a dagger," and we are left to imagine the use he makes of it when we read immediately afterwards, "Exit Voltimand with the body of Claudius; surrounded by Polonius and some others of the conspirators." Gertrude, the queen-mother, unable to support the sense of her crime, and the degradation of its discovery, kills herself; and Hamlet, after a suitable expression of grief at her loss, concludes the play with the following tag :

Within this fatal hall deprived of all my line,
My cup of grief is full; my virtue still is mine.
I still am man and king, reserved by Him on high,
I'll live to suffer still, and so do more than die.

Whether this is the Hamlet intended by Shakespeare is not the question; it is doubtless the Hamlet of the Unities, executed by a very respectable hand. Our lively Brussels editor cannot constrain his rapture:

Who can speak of the beautiful productions with which Ducis has enriched our stage, without the names of Sophocles and Shakespeare being brought back to his memory—I had almost said, to his gratitude?

How strange, then, that any reference to the works of Sophocles and Shakespeare should fail to bring before the "mind's eye" the name of Ducis!

A CARDINAL SECRETARY OF STATE.

It is the morning of that notable Sunday, waiting on the threshold of the week called Holy, when the sun is glinting through the dome windows of the grand mosque, and the children of Rome are gathered within the walls. The music is swelling high, and the white waves ecclesiastical have been frothing and eddying backwards and forwards light as spray. Figures drift by mistily for hours, and the chief priest sits and distributes whole fields of the wheat-coloured branches. There was a world of poesy abroad that day, and I could almost have wished that sweet vision to repeat itself over and over again, were it not that I am being drawn aside, and almost troubled uneasily by the disturbing of a Face!

I have been conscious of it from the very beginning. Travelling lightly down those ranks of features ecclesiastic ranged in lines about that amphitheatre—physiognomies old and worn, and stern and soft, mundane and devotional, listless and absorbed—I am stopped irresistibly at that one Face, and pass it by doubtfully. By-and-by my eye has wandered back, searching for the Face restlessly, and so I return again and again, drawn by some curious unaccountable fascination. A face not to be passed by—one not bold or obtrusive, rather shrinking and retiring, and yet standing out from its face-company, which become only so many poor subservient foils—a face of potential mark, that lives, that thinks, that works, that can play at human chess, dulling the others into pure bucolical expression. Such a face, if met in the street, you *must* go back, and by some artifice meet again, or dog home. And this is the manner of it, for it is close by me, and I can almost lay my hand upon its ermine shoulder: a leaf from an old vellum missal, a fine ivory yellow, firm features, all marked and massive, yet not large; hair richly black and strong, and wavy, yet not long, brought out with superb effect by that dash of bright scarlet skull-cap! Rembrandt would have rubbed that "accident" in frantically, with great flakes and welts—with his thumb, perhaps. It would have been his darling effect. Forehead in smooth knolls; nose firm and substantial, yet clearly cut. From two dark caves shoot and

glance Spanish eyes, fierce, full of flashing light. How many women have envied them to the Face! how many hearts have they made to shrink and tremble! And the mouth—

Now does that coarse and terrible portrait of Voltaire the younger's ferocious handling intrude itself! And, without such hint, had I not presentiment of this from the beginning? has it not been hanging over me with a dim foreshadowing that mind and power were within that small circle—that the *Anax* king, the Can-ning man of Prophet Carlyle, was at hand—that with all the fantoccini round, playing out their parts, here was the figure, so still and impulsive, that could move the wires and work the machinery? But the mouth—

Not quite that "bouche de brigand," M. Edmond; give me leave, in this humble way of mine, to interpret that feature. A long bar drawn down, but tortured with an eternal bitterness in the palate. Rue-leaves are being always on his tongue; sour lozenges are being moistened there perpetually; and so it now takes a shape of sad contempt, almost disgust. That sour smile lets me see his teeth,—superb, white as a negro's! A mouth of infinite play and power, that can smile sweetly and contract, and look cold, and kill. How the face shifts and plays! A stooped Brother of the Seventy is beside him, shrunken and bent, and to him he whispers. Brightly flash the famous jet eyes, and the sweetest, softest smile, breaking through rue-leaves and ipecacuanha, has warmed the stooped brother's heart. No brigand's mouth, I say again, M. Edmond. Yet it is gone, faster than a cloud reflected in a field of corn, and here are rue-leaves again. As the glitter and colour of the pageant proceeds, the vellum face now moves to the right or to the left, following the stages with a sort of tranquil interest. Now are the overhanging crags of eyebrows lifted, wrinkling the smooth forehead, and the thick lip corners drawn down with a spasm of repugnance—some rue-leaf memory has occurred to him; now are the eyes cast down demurely, and he looks a simple priest, a modest village curate.

And presently, when that twisting of the cord of the gold and purple strands sets in, and the vellum cheeks, being of such consideration, must go up second in order to receive its wheat-coloured palm, and I look with an absorbing interest to see it in this new function, there rises a general flutter and light buzzing of well-known name, with a ring of silver in it, as the small figure, modest, unobtrusive as a monk, almost shrinking, but with the jet eyes glistening and roving like a snake's, moves forward with a stiff, quiet walk, and hands in prayerful attitude peeping from under the ermine cape. Does that modest monk from the country—such he must be—suspect that every eye follows his steps? Now he has knelt at his prince's knees, and turns round freighted with his tall palm-staff, all curled, and flowered, and taller than he is. He is overcome by the honour, and helpless and irresolute, and with the rue-leaf flavour distilling with extra

bitterness, picks his way slowly down the steps, holding that yellow wand of his away from him with two fingers. Long shall I recollect the helpless, timid look with which, as he sits down, he tries to adjust the long and inconvenient emblem he has brought back with him; and I translate that sour pout upon the sour mouth into "What do I with this unmanageable toy?"—"Que diable fais-je dans cette galère!" And so he presently fades out, being drifted away in the ranks of the snowy figures. But I take home with me the impulsive vellum cheeks, the close-grained face cut out of solid ivory. It walks with me all day long. It tempts me back to it with overpowering interest. I feel that there is a world of mystery working ever so deep beneath those cheeks.

Rolls away now the dark cloud that overhangs that week—the sad and lugubrious succession of commemorative offices; the dismal wailing, most musical but most bald and austere; the flaring of yellow torches, and flitting of indistinct figures in the half-darkness,—and the glorious Easter Day has flashed out, triumphant and jubilant, with ringing of bells, and fuming incense, and riotous organ music, and figures in sparkling silver and scarlet, and other cheerful tones, bathed in a dazzling sunlight.

As humanity, crowded very densely before me, is rent asunder periodically, I catch glimpses of that picturesque function in all its stages, of the silver-white figures, seen mistily through incense clouds, now clustered on the steps, now scattered, now flitting past like spirits to be suddenly shut out by a heave of the dense humanity. Then do I hear the gospel chanted in Greek, according to the quaint tradition, and then, humanity parting suddenly, I see through the cloud a small train glide by—a figure, snow white and sparkling in sheen, whom I seem to know, and start as I recognise—

The vellum cheeks, the ivory yellow face again, floating through this day's solemnity as Deacon. Deacon in the high high mass! Desperately do I struggle with perverse humanity before me, who let me have but short-lived glimpses of that small glittering figure, gliding, not walking, through its function with a matchless grace. But with the day has come a change. The vellum face is glorified, is lit up with a soft tranquillity. There is the sweetest smile in the world on the bar mouth, with not a trace of rue-leaves. There is even a soft melancholy, which draws you with an irresistible fascination. It looks holy, it looks resigned, and even persecuted. No one, Romans will tell you, takes his part in this function so magnificently. Hush! irreverent humanity in front there! And from out of a dazzling mystery of lights, priests, acolytes, and fuming incense, rises a soft, sweet voice, very clear and melodious, the cardinal Deacon chanting the gospel. And by this duty, being brought to face stiffened and bedizened diplomacy, those functionaries garotted in their gold lace, look askant at each other with a smile and almost sneer; and then I see rue-leaves

back again, with a flash of menace and contempt; but all passed away in a second, even as he opens the great missal. And so through all the rest of the ways and windings of the ceremonial, tortuous certainly, I see him glide and flit by with the same soft tranquillity and matchless dignity. I feel that I must know this mysterious man.

The lights are gone, the figures have all faded away, and the sun has gone down. The pageant is over for this year. Only one day later, a retiring priest, who would not harm a fly, tells how he has that morning, wandering among the galleries in the Vatican, lost his way; and how, of a sudden, fierce sbirri came sweeping along, precursors as it were, clearing from the road all dangerous things—all men or women in fact. For he is coming, the vellum-cheeked, passing from the Pope's chambers to his own. Back, intruders! disguised assassins, as ye may prove to be. So priest is hustled away to a corner anywhere, with much suspicion and violence, while presently passes by swiftly the black short figure, dark and terrible, and is gone in an instant. Is not here a new element, a new part in the piece? Vellum-cheeked, with Damocles's sword shining over his head. It adds a deeper fascination to that picture. Again I whisper to myself, "I must see, and know, and speak with him."

One night, passing late under our modest archway, I find a state of general illumination and festivity, wholly abnormal and foreign to the known habits of the host. There is a flush and hum of expectation, and men look round corners and convenient places with a sense as of some awful event now at hand and about to burst. Grand-Ducal Calmuck disguised, now in resplendent livery, is seen afar off at the top of the marble flight, waiting tranquilly. Host now surely demented, and with a wild look in his eyes I had not noticed before, brushes by me without speech, still holding his head between his hands. I can see before many hours he will be ripe for the waistcoat that is not crooked. Information being hopeless from such a quarter, an intelligent menial lets me know that "Il Cardinale" is expected to visit the grand-ducal immensities now residing at the hotel; and knowing that to all intents and purposes there is but one definite practical cardinal spoken of in the city, I can guess to whom this points.

The vellum-cheeked again! Thus brought on the stage with this mysterious designation—the cardinal, the man, the *can-ning* man. All things fit harmoniously with his popular attributes. I have heard him talked of with bated breath as plain *HE*! "What will *HE* say? what will *HE* do?" falls on my ear at street-corners, as two purple monsignori glide past. Bogueyism still in the ascendant! and in excellent keeping is this nightly flight through the shadows from the three little windows high in the Vatican. Who rides by night? the great mystery-man and vampire cardinal, as he is known in popular

Roman Volks'-lore. It is but rational to hope that he will come in preternatural plumage, and flit by me, as I stand on the bottom step of my marble flight of stairs (mine by temporary use), and wait for him anxiously.

Clatter of carriages and hoofs growing more and more obstreperous as they draw near—but merely passing on with a flash of lamps into the night—excite only empty alarms and a justifiable resentment. For one poor sufferer, the suspense must be horrible. How many times that night did the brain of demented host topple on the verge of lunacy? But hark! Clatter again of carriage and hoofs, but this time of a stately solemn order: hoofs tramping it solemnly, as is only befitting the Barclay and Perkins animals that draw princesses of the Church. As the great flaming red berline comes reeling and heaving up, and its one eye pours a flood of light into the arch, the three pantomimic footmen in the comic cocked-hats and flowing beadle's cloaks, are on the ground in an instant, discharging the door and steps with a succession of bangs: instantly opens little folding-door at the top of marble flight, disclosing illuminated chambers with disguised Calmucks, artfully made up in florid livery, seen flitting in the light. Descends now a dark-robed Maggiordomo (he might have been a notary lent from the Opera) with a pair of wax candles ready lighted, and lurks round the corner until the flitting moment. Hush! he comes—descending lightly from his great flame-coloured berline. Emerge now from ambush, notary from L'Elisir d'Amore, with thy candles, and make as though you would kiss the dust.

The light being suspended overhead and casting spasmodic shadows, it is a positive Rembrandt figure that walks by me so swiftly, as though it were trampling roughshod over obstacles. The ivory face shining out yellowly, the eyes, the famous eyes like coals, at the bottom of their caverns, the mouth compressed and almost insolent. He is dark, all dark to-night; a caravaggio figure rubbed in with chalk and charcoal. Black-robed, save as to the neat little scarlet buttons and scarlet stockings peeping out. I think with wonder of the soft, gentle, white-robed ascetic, seen but yesterday amid floating clouds of incense, and crucifixes, and lighted tapers, attended with dreamy notions of a day not far distant when I shall sing, "Sanete Antonelli, ora pro nobis!" and, presto! he walks by, roughly tramping on imaginary rebellious necks, and with a scornful face—still not approaching to that "bouche de brigand" of yours, M. Edmond: to-night it is Il Cardinale Segretario, Il.E. the Cardinal Secretary of State! yesterday we were but a poor holy man and simple deacon.

As I go out again into the night and see the suspicious errandless figures hovering about the flame-coloured coach, who have the look indefinable of disguised police, and the lounging gendarmes hanging about, striving to appear purposeless too, and then look up to the brightly illuminated window where there are Grand-

Ducal shadows flitting past, and where "He" is sitting next her highness, rippling off most sweet and silvery French, I think what a wretched sinking heart must shrink and wither away behind those cardinal's robes! What sort of a grisly private skeleton has he to come home to and find sitting in those Vatican chambers? or who indeed may travel abroad with him on state occasions and triumphs, standing by his ear on the wheel of the flame-coloured coach, to whisper, not "Remember that thou art but man!" but this, "Remember thou art the most hated man in Rome! Remember that this hate is savage, furious, and to be sated with blood only: at the first sign of revolution, wild, clear-eyed sans-culottes will make straight for that chamber of the three windows, frantic women rending thee limb from limb, men bearing thy head upon a pole!" That is something to think on at the dead hours of the night.

I go out into thoroughfares and by-ways, pursued by the strangest craving to hunt to earth this mysterious character; I gather opinions from various ranks, and find a curious unanimity—at best a certain doubtfulness. There is no quarter. Every man's hand is armed with a rough stone, flung on the first invitation. It is Aunt Sally in purple; and the sticks come flying fast and thick.

And yet this curious fact remains. Bogie is impalpable! Gentle and simple join in the hue and cry, but are unable to account for this singular antipathy. I grow weary of putting to them the question, "What wrong hath this man done that you must so persecute him?" Stimulated by opposition, I determine to do battle with the spectre. I actually feel it incumbent to issue a sort of "royal commission" directed to myself, to collect evidence and report upon the facts. And your special commissioner does hereby respectfully submit the following report, which is in a manner no report:

There was the special cabman, with a great bushy beard, and a gruff voice, and a cap that swelled and overflowed after the manner of a turban, with a general Turkish flavour about him, to whom I was at first attracted by the royal Ottoman fashion in which he was having his boots cleaned as he sat upon his box. The special Tureo-cabman being skilfully quickened by artful allusion to the unprecedently high quotation of oats, and the general indisposition to enjoy carriage exercise, lashes his horses vindictively. His horses start away with a bound. "He has done it," special cabman remarks, pointing his thumb over his shoulder. "Tis all his work. See you this, signor? Last year, did not every gentle stranger, if he only wished to cross the street, send for a vettura and do the thing in a princely manner? Whose work, I say, is this?" (emphasised by a ferocious crack of his whip). "A-r-r-r! An-to-NEL-li's!" (with a savage stress on the third syllable). Special cabman will not bear pressing as to the immediate connexion considered in the relation of cause and effect between this wicked minister and the marked disinclination of tourists to enjoy carriage exercise. He would plainly

concur in that famous solution of all the wrecks on Goodwin Sands, and have heartily condemned Tenterden steeple; but, seeing that he has not convinced, Ottoman cabman hoarsely intimates that he has an argument in his quiver which is, so to speak, a perfect clincher—it is only too plain, the thing is not worth discussion—all the world knows it: *Is not his brother GOVERNOR OF THE BANK?* A smile of triumph, with an ominous shake of the bushy beard, and he has lashed his horses into a furious gallop. No need of argument after *that!* He retires crowned from the discussion after *that!*

Burgher behind his counter, delving, a perfect navvy, among his trays and shelves of commodities below, upon the mysterious bogie name being mentioned to him, is brought up suddenly in his mining, and rests, as it were, upon his spade. "An-to-NEL-li," he repeats, softly (with the popular stress on third syllable). "Il Cardinale! ah, to be sure, yes?" The "eminentissimo" is the bane of the country. From those three Vatican windows descends a blight worse than the *aria cattiva*, the bad air. "What has he *done*? what has he *done*? what *has* he *done*?" Burgher folding his arms, pauses, then doubtfully goes on: "The noble strangers will not buy; they cheapen our wares; the harvests, signor, are getting worse every year; the ground is parched with excessive drought." "But," it is mildly objected, "this is only Tenterden steeple again. Is this poor baited eminentissimo one of the genii, or a familiar of the Great Nameless?" "Pah!" exclaims burgher, dropping his voice, "IL SUO FRATELLO E GOVERNATORE DELLA BANCA." Causa finita est!

"The day HE falls," another trading burgher tells me, "all Rome will illuminate! The Santo Padre himself is aweary of him." Comes then impatient rejoinder, "What wrong has he done? Has he robbed the state?" "Well, no. But have you not heard? His brother is Governor of the Bank." "Has he worked homicide, murder, and the rest of it?" "No. But his brother," &c. &c. It revolves in that eternal circle: *NON E FRATELLO IL GOVERNATORE DELLA BANCA?*

It was the misfortune of our Cardinal Secretary of State to have first seen the light close to the notoriously operatic locality of Terracina. It is set out conspicuously in the almanacks of the polite circles. Hence, I suspect as I muse about him, that fitting on of the *bouche de brigand*; hence the pleasant legends of the early life of young Giacomo Antonelli, reared in all the excitement of bandit life, and playfully taking part as an outsider, dressed in a miniature little hat and ribbons, and jacket of the regulation pattern, while his sire and other friends stopped and riled the well-lined diligence.

Let us think of this, too. There are his scarlet brethren, overshadowed by the broad hat, hedging him round in a circle and watching him distrustfully. There is a strong party among the seventy who would thrust him gently

from the wheel, holding that his bad seaman-ship has endangered the heavy temporal tender which sails behind the spiritual bark of Saint Peter. But they are powerless, single or in combination. "If he fall, not one of us is fit to step into his place." The days of ambitious cardinalships are gone by, and these are mostly gentle, pious well-meaning men, of little capability beyond their ecclesiastical *lasts*. Such as look on from afar off, think of the florid English cardinal, sitting in the ministerial chair, and signing decrees, but flounder sadly in such speculation. He could not battle down the tide of nationalities. Italy for the Italians is as loud and persistent as was ever Ireland for the Irish. He has no "party" among the seventy. He will never sign himself "Nic. Card. Wiseman, Segretario."

Amid all this tempest of obloquy, this din of evil tongues, enough to chill the most iron heart, the vellum-cheeked has a sort of comforting bower to withdraw into—a circle of the firmest and fastest friends man ever possessed. Sheltered round by these protecting trees, for him the storms no longer blow; he sits in the shade and forgets that he has enemies. Cheerfully he sits among them, and says, with a smile and with a half sigh, that he is the best abused man in Europe! He gives way to a childlike gaiety. It is Cato at Tusculum over again. He is full of a sweet merriment—the best abused man in Europe. He brings out his marbles and curiosities, and delivers a sportive lecture on their beauties. He gives dinner parties, where he is the smooth, graceful host. He dines out himself, and is a witty talker.

No wonder, then, when gigantic friend strides in cheerily one morning, and bids me arise, for he has arranged a visit to the mysterious Cardinal, that I spring up excitedly. He had seen, had gigantic friend, the Secretary's secretary, and all things had been made straight and smooth.

Not long is our Roman chariot scouring the narrow line of streets between the English pale and the towering ochre-coloured palace.

Flight after flight of marble stair. Broad, sufficient for a dozen men to march up abreast, each flight in itself so high that, after the third or so is surmounted, you begin to pause and gasp. It becomes a grand Mont Blanc ascent, with eternal marble for eternal snows. And now the Grands Mulets come in sight; we could go yet higher, but we pass, instead, into this ante-chamber, where are the servants sitting, who rise up and do us homage. Pass on, if it so please you, signori, into the next chamber.

A long low chamber, positively brilliant with windows, whence is a matchless view; a pretty chamber, with rich green and gold panelling, and furnished with many elegancies. Furnished, too, with visitors—patients it may be, or clients—sitting round, leaning on the tops of sticks or umbrellas. A curious miscellany, suggesting forcibly the dismal company that wait in a dentist's ante-chamber. Most are of the humbler order, one being clearly agricultural, on leave, as it were, from Wilkie's famous *Reut Day*.

How did the bucolic farmer waiting his turn, sucking his stick top, with his hat on the ground between his knees, get into an Eternal City? Here, he unquestionably is. A pale widow-looking woman, in rusty black, sitting there, sad and patient; what can she have to trouble a Cardinal Secretary with? A trader, and a soldier. These are the patients waiting outside the operating-room.

A little silver bell has tinkled, and Secretary's secretary skims away like a bird. Gigantesque friend and I feel curious sensation, and dread the appalling "Now, sir!" of the dentist's familiar.

Reappears, presently, Secretary's secretary, with much mystery, making passes and significant gestures. Agriculturist seeing us moving forward in obedience to this Od force, enters a faint protest by rising from his chair; but subsides again into the Rent Day, feeling that he is powerless. We enter a little chamber, and the door is softly closed behind us: a dainty little cabinet of a place, panelled in green and gold also, but whose appointments and appropriate furniture are all absorbed into the small dark figure sitting at the table. With magnificent effect, stands out the firm cleanly cut face, no longer vellum-cheeked in the broad light rushing in, in floods, at the window, and rising on billows, as it were, of flowing papers, petitions, and documents official, unrolled and tossed lightly before him. So clear and brilliant is it flung out by that deep richly green background and scarlet carpet, that I think the great mystery cardinal must have studied the fine old portrait colouring, and artfully selected this bold combination. As he rises out of that documental foam, and, with a smile the most overpoweringly gracious and fascinating welcomes his two visitors, the hair seems to me at this closer view yet more richly luxuriant, more classically waving, and the eye caverns the darkest and most piercing, that man can conceive. In that vividly scarlet skull-cap, and dark cloth robe with a little cape, edged with a fine scarlet line and dotted with minute scarlet buttons, he becomes to me the most mysterious awe-inspiring figure—true, genuine secretary of state. Sweet phrases come rolling thickly over those lips which the profane wit would christen "brigand," and it seems to me the most melodious voice I ever heard.

Now, two chairs are drawn close to the documentary table, and H.E. the Cardinal Secretary, with his chair thrown back a little, reels forth discourse most musical, at times quaintly bilingual, running fitfully from Italian into French. I steal a glance round the room and wonder at its small size; but then recollect that this is a cabinet—a minister's boudoir. A most coquettish and artistic disorder prevails in it, too, and there are rare prints hung on the green wall; the furniture is of a quaint pattern; and an ancient altar triptych of Byzantine pattern, leans against a chair. A pretty little open-work screen, the

carving of which is a speciality in certain Italian provinces, stands erect upon the table and fences off the glare. Even as he sits, most graceful is the attitude and effect: his black robe of the finest cloth, falling in judicious folds, and the neatest cleanest-shaped ankle cased in a bright scarlet stocking without crease or seam, peeping out under the skirt daintily looped up. Gigantesque friend alludes to a certain friendship as dating from school-days. "Ah," sighs softly the Cardinal, with a plaintive regret, "ce sont quelquefois les connaissances les plus agréables!" And I think for the moment that I have heard a Rochefoucauld maxim of singular point and novelty. Gigantesque friend, knowing that his eminence is curious in bric-a-brac and art reliques, has ventured to bring some rare engraved signet rings from his well-known collection, for H.E.'s inspection. The dark eyes lighten—he is virtuoso himself—and yonder, in those inner chambers, keeps an unique collection of gems and marbles. Another day he will show us these treasures, with a trifle in the way of a picture or two; but alas! are there not the clients outside, waiting to devour him? These art enemies must have their prey; but the ring is curious—most curious—and he smiles over it with love, and peers into it with the piercing eyes, then fetches out from somewhere under the great flood of lawyers' briefs, a great magnifier, and studies it with that aid. There is yet another signet wondrously wrought as to framework, in the Cellini manner, but unhappily lacking the stone. Eminency suddenly be-thinks him of a remedy, and, groping in a little cabinet drawer, fetches forth a little casket, and out of the little casket picks, with neat fingers, one special green gem, which he has had in his mind, but which will not suit. He has fallen into a bric-a-brac dream; but presently a cloud gathers about the caverns, and he wakes. The clients press on him in a practical reality. The bugbear Business comes in, roughly tramping down these delicate fancies. So gigantesque friend rises, and chairs are pushed away, and Eminency rises, and the black shiny cloth falls gracefully and hides the neat scarlet ankle. Sweetest and most gracious dismissal, the shining teeth flash upon us, little bell rings softly, and Cardinal Secretary of State fades into his deep green background. It is bucolic's turn at last.

This Part closes Vol. 3; subscriptions expiring with it should *now* be renewed to secure the whole of the new serial, "Great Expectations," to appear in Vol. 4. The circulation, now over 200,000 in Europe, has doubled here during the present volume, and is rapidly increasing.

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